THE LIBRARY
OF THE

Periodical Collection
CLASS
BOOK

GRAND SUMMER
FICTION NUMBER

y TAX your
Health?
t a REBATE by
Drinking
'RY'S
PURE
BREAKFAST
OCOA
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Sherlock Holmes
ON THE
FILM

July,
1921.

A
GOOD TURN
When you
have read
this copy
pass it on to
a friend.

No. 367
VOL 62

1/- net.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Sweets without cooking!

At a cost of less than one shilling a pound

Truly the most delicious sweets you ever ate—chocolates, creamy fudge, bonbons—better than the most expensive sweet you can buy!

And the wonderful thing about it is that anybody can make it—in ten minutes' time—*without cooking!*

The only magic needed is Libby's Evaporated Milk.

Just mix half a gill of Libby's Evaporated Milk with 1 lb. of icing sugar, flavour to taste, and drop from a spoon on oiled paper.

That's the foundation formula from which an endless variety of sweets can be made—and they are all described in the new Libby Milk Booklet we are waiting to send you.

The whole thing is so simple there's no chance of failure—not much like the old-fashioned cooked sweet.

Get your tin of Libby's Evaporated Milk to-day and give your family—and yourself—a real treat, one that you'll want to repeat frequently.

And let the kiddies make their own sweets—they'll have the time of their lives. Besides, the creamy richness of Libby's Milk—which alone makes possible these wonderful sweets—furnishes just the wholesome food value in the sweet you want your children to have. In fact, it's a jolly fine food for the whole family.

But don't stop at using Libby's Milk in sweets—that's only one of the many miracles you can perform with it.

Use it in all your cooking—in ice cream, in coffee and cocoa.

Just try the recipes in the Milk Booklet and watch the saving on your butter bills, for Libby's is the milk—"so rich you need no butter." The Libby Milk Booklet will be sent to you free—write for your copy to-day.

Let your Grocer be your Milkman.

Libby, McNeill & Libby, Ltd.

(Dept. 1), 8, GREAT TOWER STREET, LONDON, E.C.3.

Branches: MANCHESTER. ABERDEEN. BRISTOL. HULL.
LIVERPOOL. NEWCASTLE. GLASGOW. BIRMINGHAM. BELFAST.

ACTION!

Decide quickly! Act quickly! and within six to 12 months you may qualify yourself to fill a responsible position in business

—Six to Twelve Months!

"That might easily be possible," you say, "in the case of a man with the advantages of wide experience. But would it be possible in my own case, as I have had very little experience in business and no special training."

Our answer to you is that hundreds of our students whose circumstances were similar to your own are this day actually filling well-paid positions as Accountants, Secretaries and Managers for which they qualified within six to twelve months of enrolment.

"Give me positive proof of that statement."

Positive proof is given you in a leaflet we send you with our Prospectus. This leaflet reproduces records of scores of our students, and you will notice that these records are certified genuine by a Public Notary.

The School of Accountancy's Guarantee to train you until you are qualified to fill a responsible position opens up before you a clear and practical path of progress

When we undertake to train a man to qualify for a specific position or to pass a professional examination, we train that man until he succeeds.

Although most of our students complete their courses within six to twelve months of enrolment, there is no fixed time limit and the fees do not vary whether the training takes a few months or a few years.

Become an Accountant, Company Secretary, Office or Works Manager

These are the men who are needed to-day in business, and you can definitely qualify for such positions by training in your own home, in your spare time, under the guidance of the School of Accountancy. The training we give is successful because it is thorough, and because the tutors who train you know exactly what knowledge is needed by a man in order to secure the position he sets out to attain.

✶ *Send for this FREE BOOK*

It gives particulars of all our Courses and terms, and contains facts which will convince you that our training will qualify you to fill a responsible executive position. Write for a copy to-day. Simply send us a post-card saying: "Please forward me free booklet advertised in THE STRAND MAGAZINE."

THE SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY

2, West Regent St., Glasgow; 10, Essex St., Strand, London, W.C.2

Millgate Buildings, Long Millgate - MANCHESTER.
62, Dale Street - - - - - LIVERPOOL.
Post Office House, Infirmary Street - - - LEEDS.
8, Newhall Street - - - - - BIRMINGHAM.

The sensible size for out-of-doors and home use.

The Aladdin Thermalware Jar.

Solid Food or Liquid for a whole party kept Hot or Ice Cold

The most serviceable of Thermal Jars.
Makes a success of any meal out of doors.
Always of use in the home.
Light in weight—practically unbreakable.
Easily carried, if desired, by the bail.
Has a 4in. diameter opening—easy filling, easy emptying and cleaning.

IN GREAT DEMAND NOW

ALL who love getting out of doors with children or friends to enjoy themselves by road, river or country will appreciate the advantages of having an ALADDIN Thermalware Jar, in which adequate supplies of cooked foods or liquids can be conveniently and cleanly stored and carried—and kept at their original temperature for as long as you like.

When not in holiday use the ALADDIN is splendid for keeping Meat, Butter, Milk, etc., sweet and fresh in any sort of weather. It is excellent value for money and lasts for years.

THE

Aladdin

THERMALWARE JAR

is demonstrated and sold at the following stores:—

Sizaire Berwick, Ltd., 27, Old Bond Street, S.W.1.
Harrods Ltd., Brompton Road, S.W.1.
S. Smith & Sons, Ltd., 179, Great Portland Street, W.1.
Staines Kitchen Equipment Co., 131, Victoria Street, S.W.1.
J. C. Vickery, 177, Regent Street, S.W.1.
Gordon Watney & Co., Ltd., 31, Brook Street, W.
Wm. Whiteley, Ltd., Queen's Road, W.
Woodcock & Co., 22, East Castle Street, Oxford Street, W.

One-Gallon Size (as illustrated) £5 5 0
Two-Quart Size £4 4 0

TO "STRAND" READERS OUTSIDE LONDON.
Write for full particulars of the Aladdin Thermalware Jar if you are not a customer of any of the above stores. We guarantee all purchasers satisfaction or return of money.

ALADDIN INDUSTRIES, LTD. (Dept. H),
130, SOUTHWARK STREET, LONDON, S.E.1.

"The Deepest Dye"

for modish wear,
for homely wear,
for all-time wear,

for men, women, and children, Hawley-Dyed Black Stockings and Socks are the most satisfactory. Their jet blackness cannot be impaired by the harshest laundry treatment.

Hawley's Hygienic Black
British Dye
FOR STOCKINGS AND SOCKS

is inseparable from the fabric upon which it is dyed, so that the dye cannot transfer in the slightest degree to the most delicate skin.

Ask at your hosiery counter to see Hawley-Dyed Black Stockings and Socks—*bearing the name Hawley*—the guarantee of the Deepest Dye, permanent and hygienic—the only Hosiery which meets needs at once of fashion and economy.

Hawley-Dyed Black Stockings and Socks are supplied in a large variety of styles and qualities.

Its Fastness is Impregnable.

TRADE MARK

Always look for the name 'Hawley's'

Sole Dyers (to the Trade only):
A. E. HAWLEY & Co., Ltd.,
Hosiery-Dyers, Bleachers & Finishers,
Sketchley Dye Works, Hinckley, Eng.
℗16

SEE WITH THE EYES OF YOUTH
by wearing
KRYPTOK
Invisible Fused Bifocals.

The modern KRYPTOK Fused Bifocal.

The old bifocal.

NOTICE that KRYPTOK Double-Vision Lenses are entirely free from the ugly seams and ridges which are so disfiguring to the wearer of the old-fashioned bifocals. KRYPTOK Lenses, on the other hand, add distinction to your appearance, and also give you the unique advantages of a "bifocal." The reading lens is invisibly fused in the distance lens, and, the exterior surfaces being of unbroken curvature, there is nothing to indicate to observers that the wearer has reached the presbyopic age. All Oculists and Opticians prescribe them.

For Sample Lens and full Descriptive Literature write to
KRYPTOK, LTD., Advertising Dept., Letchworth Garden City, Herts.

The Safest way to buy her RING or yours is

after leisurely selection and careful comparison in the quietness of your home.

THE RING BOOK, which we will send to you, delineates 122 Gem Rings in all their Natural Sparkle, Colours, and Beauty. You can select from it as surely as if you were choosing from the actual Rings. People from all over the World are buying by this *safe* method.

After you have made your selection, we send the Ring, fully insured to your address, on a fortnight's unconditional approval. If, within 14 days of receipt, you wish to change your mind, we will either exchange the Ring, allowing full value for it, *or you can return it and have your money back in full.*

If you keep the Ring, you do so on this fair understanding:

Whenever you wish, after one year or twenty years, and subject to Ring Book Conditions, we will re-purchase your Ring at 10% less than the price paid.

WRITE NOW FOR "THE RING BOOK" describing our fair methods fully, and illustrating Engagement, Dress, and Men's Rings, priced from **£5 : 5 : 0 up to £325.**

The NORTHERN GOLDSMITHS Co.,
No. 6, GOLDSMITHS' HALL,
"The RING SHOP for the WORLD,"
NEWCASTLE upon-TYNE, England.

Yardley's
Old English Lavender Soap

The Aristocrat of Toilet Soaps

An extra fine Toilet Soap for dainty hands and delicate complexions.

Delightfully and lavishly perfumed, it is one of the most charming of the little elegancies of the toilet.

Of all Chemists, Perfumers, and Stores, and from

YARDLEY & CO., LTD.
8, NEW BOND ST., LONDON.

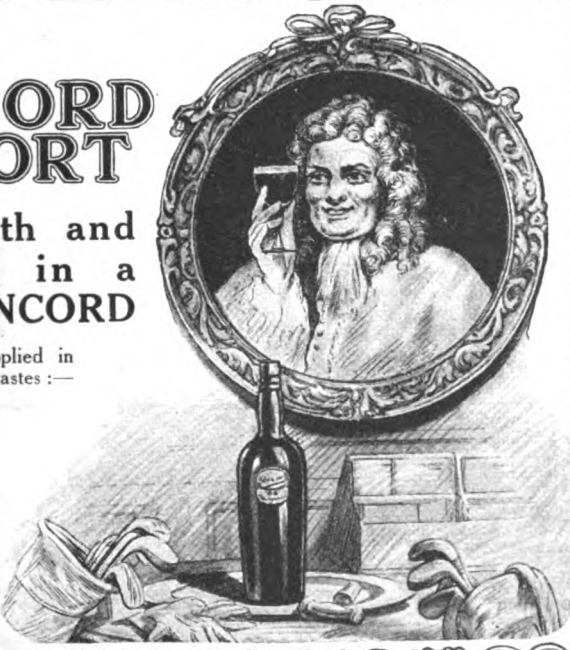
To H.R.H The Prince of Wales.

By Appointment.

BOX OF **3** LARGE TABLETS

3/6

CONCORD PORT



There's health and good cheer in a bottle of CONCORD

CONCORD Port is supplied in different qualities to suit all tastes :—

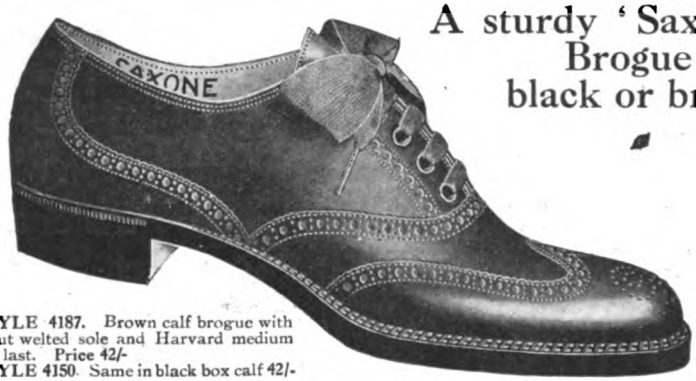
V.O.P. Fine old tawny. Price 7/6 per bottle.

MAXIME. Superb old tawny, great age. Price 8/6 per bottle.

VINTAGE. Of the famous years 1884, 1887, 1896 and 1900.

If difficulty is experienced in obtaining supplies, please communicate with

Messrs. W. H. CHAPLIN & Co., Ltd. 48, Mark Lane, London, E.C.3.



A sturdy 'Saxone' Brogue in black or brown

STYLE 4187. Brown calf brogue with stout welted sole and Harvard medium toe last. Price 42/-
STYLE 4150. Same in black box calf 42/-

THIS is one of the models which made 'Saxone' famous throughout the land. Like all other 'Saxone' Shoes, it is made throughout of good honest leather, and whilst not unduly heavy it withstands bad weather and real hard wear in a remarkable manner.

Sold only by SAXONE SHOE CO. Ltd. London: 5 & 6 Coventry Street, W.1; 231 Regent Street, W.1; 56 & 57 Strand, W.C. 2; 11 & 12 Cheapside, E.C. 2. *And all large towns.*

SAXONE

(Regd. Trade Mark).

Use this Famous Beautifier

—and Win Admiration

To improve your skin and complexion try Icilma Cream, the world-famous Beautifier. This dainty cream is nice to look at, pleasant to handle, and *sweetly scented* with Icilma Bouquet Perfume. Just a little *day by day* is all that is needed

And then complete your toilet with a touch of the fascinating *silk-sifted* Icilma Bouquet Face Powder. Perfumed with the same glorious perfume as Icilma Cream. Adheres closely—cools and refreshes.

"My Beauty Secret."

Icilma

Cream

Price 1/3; large pot 2/-, everywhere. Flesh-tinted Cream, 1/9 per pot. Icilma Bouquet Face Powder (two tints—Naturelle and Crème), 2/6 per box.

Use it daily and look your best

—and complete your toilet with Icilma Bouquet Face Powder.

FREE TEST.

Send a postcard for a dainty free sample and a copy of our booklet, "The Icilma Way to Beauty." International Icilma Trading Co., Ltd. (Dept. 14) 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, King's Road, St. Pancras, London, N.W.1.

Postcards MUST have 1d. stamp—Envelopes 2d. Stamp.

Restful and Home-like Upholstery at Economical Prices.

THE "HOLYROOD."

EASY PAYMENTS or CASH

CARRIAGE PAID TO ANY RAILWAY STATION

Cash with order.

Settee, one end adjustable, Loose Cushion, **£19** or Easy Payment **£21—£3** down, **15/-** mthly.
Arm Chair, "Forty-winks" Head Rests, **£10** „ „ **£11—£2** „ **10/-** „
Divan Chair, Club Pattern - - - **£9** „ „ **£10—£2** „ **10/-** „
Three-Piece Set, Settee & Pair of Chairs, **£38** „ „ **£42—£4** „ **30/-** „

Luxurious and soundly upholstered. Woollen Flocks. Coppered Steel Springs. British Webs. Seats, Backs and Arms all well sprung. Covered in a variety of French and other Tapestries. Patterns submitted for Customer's selection.

Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. J. R. GRANT, Proprietor. (Dept. E). **Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL**

	Per pair
Regulation Heavy-weight -	9/-
Extra Fine Light-weight -	11/-
Extra Fine Light Shade -	12/-
Ladies' Puttees : With Spats	12/6
(detachable 1/- extra)	
Without Spats - - -	7/6

Patentees and Sole Manufacturers :
FOX BROS. & CO., Ltd. (Dept. F)
Wellington, SOMERSET.

"F.I.P."—*Fox's Improved Puttees.*

The Outdoor Man & Woman

have long proved the value of Fox's Puttees for weather protection, comfort & convenience.

The most hygienic leg-covering—giving full weather protection combined with comfort. The spiral fit and non-fray edges ensure ease and smartness — the super-quality material guarantees long wear and good appearance.

CAUTION.

See that the name 'FOX' is on the metal discs (right and left), attached to every genuine pair of FOX's New Non-Fray Spiral Puttees. (R) (L)

Agents for United States :
The MANLEY & JOHNSON CORPORATION, 260, West Broadway, New York, U.S.A.

"*Non-Fray Spiral.*"

FOX'S F.I.P. PUTTEES

£500
Offered for Ideas
YOUR OPPORTUNITY

GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., Proprietors of the "Strand Magazine," etc., offer the above sum for Simple Suggestions.

TRY IT!

THIS competition is open to every reader of the STRAND MAGAZINE or any other of Newnes' publications, a list of which is given on the facing page. You need no artistic, literary, or even business knowledge to win one of the prizes. The child at school, the wife in the home, and the man in the street have all an equal chance. Read what follows :—

IDEAS ARE WORTH MONEY

Few people realize the importance of the *idea* in an advertisement. Many of the most famous advertisements of our time are the results of simple suggestions made by people who knew nothing of the craft of publicity. The well-known phrase "Worth a Guinea a Box" originated in that way. Again, "Bubbles" was not painted as an advertisement of Pears' Soap, but a member of the firm saw its possibilities, and the picture was purchased. Scores of similar instances could be given.

First Prize - £200
Second Prize £100
Third Prize - £50
20 Prizes of- - £5
25 Prizes of- - £2

No Entrance Fee

WE WANT YOURS

Everybody has ideas of this kind at some time or other—a happy phrase which may become the "slogan" of a great business, a rough suggestion which may blossom out as a poster of world-wide fame. We are convinced that hundreds of good ideas are wasted for lack of opportunity to utilize them. Well, here is the opportunity. If you have an idea or suggestion of any kind which you think may be of any use to any of the advertisers in any of the Newnes publications, SEND IT IN.

AN EQUAL CHANCE FOR ALL

WHAT TO DO

Look through the advertisement pages of this magazine; select any advertisement you like, see if you can get a new "idea" for advertising the same article—or an improvement on the advertisement. Try to pick out the essential points which the advertiser is trying to convey; then see whether you can present them in more novel or striking manner. Apply this test to several advertisements and you will soon find suggestions coming to you—a phrase, a suggestion for a picture, or an *idea* for a picture.

WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR IDEA, sketch it out, or describe it in a few words as plainly as possible, attach the coupon, and send in as directed in the Rules. Remember that it does not matter whether your sketch is good or bad, from an art point of view, or whether your idea is described in polished phrases or not. It is the *Idea*, and the idea alone, that will count.

All Ideas sent in will first be submitted to a committee of advertisement experts. It will be their business to utilize and carry out your ideas in proper form. They may be sent in crude or imperfect. In this way any lack of technical knowledge on the part of the competitor will be made good, and the Final Judges will have only the *merit* of the idea itself to consider.

THE FINAL JUDGES

When the ideas have been thus "laid out" equally effectively from a technical point of view, they will be submitted to the Final Judges, who will then decide upon their relative merits *as ideas*, and award the prizes accordingly. The following gentlemen, all of whom are well known in the advertising world, have kindly consented to act in this capacity:—

Sir FRANK NEWNES, Bart.
The Right Hon. LORD RIDDELL.
H. GREENHOUGH SMITH,
Editor "Strand Magazine."
GALLOWAY FRASER,
Editor "Tit-Bits."

You can take your idea from any Advertisement appearing in any of the Newnes Publications published during the months of MAY, JUNE, JULY, *and* AUGUST, 1921.

STRAND MAGAZINE
TIT-BITS
JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY
LADIES' FIELD
The HOME MAGAZINE
THE WIDE WORLD
The GRAND MAGAZINE
OUR HOMES AND GARDENS
WOMAN'S LIFE
THE CAPTAIN
Leach's LADY'S COMPANION
„ NEWEST FASHIONS
„ CHILDREN'S FASHIONS

READ THESE RULES.

1.—All entries which do not conform to these conditions will be disqualified.

2.—All Ideas submitted must apply to one of the commodities advertised in this or any other of the Newnes publications (see list below).

3.—Competitors may submit as many Ideas as they choose, but each separate Idea must be accompanied by a coupon cut from the publication in which appears the advertisement to which the Idea refers.

4.—All Ideas to which prizes are awarded become the absolute property of GEORGE NEWNES, LTD.

5.—No Ideas can be returned, but any unsuccessful entries which appear to possess merit may be submitted to advertisers, and, if used, paid for by arrangement.

6.—The Judges' decision must be accepted by all competitors as absolutely final, and no correspondence can be entered into.

Entries should be addressed to THE COMPETITION EDITOR, GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 8, Southampton St., Strand, W.C.2, and the envelope marked "IDEAS" in the bottom left-hand corner. THEY MUST BE RECEIVED NOT LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30, 1921.

DON'T CONFINE YOUR EFFORTS TO THIS MAGAZINE. LOOK THROUGH THE OTHER PAPERS MENTIONED ABOVE. SEND AS MANY EFFORTS AS YOU LIKE.

Coupon

£500

Good for ONE ENTRY in the Geo. Newnes' ADVERTISING IDEAS COMPETITION

POST THIS COUPON WITH YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO
The Competition Editor
GEO. NEWNES, LTD.
8 · SOUTHAMPTON STREET, STRAND · W.C.2

NORFOLK STUDIO

LUX *for Garden Party frocks.*

THE charm of line and colour; the grace of each single fold, is preserved to dress fabrics washed with Lux. That exquisite cleanliness as of newness can be maintained by a lady's gentle hands and a packet of Lux.

There is no wear and tear to injure the fabric when Lux is used—no shrinking to distort the shape and delicate sense of proportion of the most delightful dress or gown.

LUX WILL NOT HARM A SILKEN THREAD—
IT WON'T SHRINK WOOLLENS.

Packets (two sizes) may be obtained everywhere.

Use LUX for washing Silk, Crêpe-de-Chine, Georgette, Lawn, Muslin, Lace, all Dainty Fabrics and Woollens.

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, PORT SUNLIGHT.

Lx 222—28

Compare a Necklet of Ciro Pearls costing

£1 : 1 : 0

You will be astonished at their resemblance, and will realise forcibly the extravagance of purchasing Oriental Pearls.

with a Necklet of Real Pearls costing

500 Gns.

Ciro Necklet equivalent to £500 one.

The following letter shows how one of our clients proved this to be the case :—

WALTHAMSTOW.

"A day or two ago I was looking over some pearl necklets in a London Jeweller's, and there were one or two marked at £500 and over, which seemed no better than yours ; in fact, if I had to choose between them without knowing the price, I should choose the 'Ciro.'"

FREE OF COST TO YOURSELF YOU MAY MAKE THE COMPARISON, AND FOR ONE GUINEA YOU MAY POSSESS THE FACSIMILE OF A £500 NECKLET.

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea we will send you a Necklet of Ciro Pearls, 16in. long, or a Ring, Brooch, Ear-rings, or any other Jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls (complete with case). If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within seven days and we will refund your money.

Other lengths at proportionate rates—Gold Clasp 2/6 extra.

Our Booklet, No. 12, contains designs of all new jewels (sent post free).

CIRO PEARLS, Ltd. (Dept. 12), 39, Old Bond Street, London, W.1, Piccadilly End.

Our Showrooms are on the first floor over Lloyds Bank.

Thomas Inch.

I CURE WEAK NERVES.

I want every reader of the STRAND MAG. who suffers from nerve weakness or ill health of any description to write *at once* for my free book on nerve trouble.

I can positively cure sleeplessness, the worry habit, irritability, palpitation, sudden exhaustion, heaviness of limbs, in fact, *ANY* heart, nerve or stomach trouble.

You cannot be happy or a social or business success with weak nerves—let me make you fit so that you become the success you were meant to be. My treatment has been tested with difficult shellshock cases during the war and emerged with flying colours

TO THE MIDDLE-AGED.

I hold some extraordinary testimonials from pupils even over 60 as to the wonderful rejuvenating powers of the INCH HOME TREATMENT. You are invited to lay full details of your case before me and I will send book and diagnosis by return without fee or obligation. Enclose two 2d. stamps.

THOMAS INCH, (Dept. S), 74, Clarendon Rd., Putney, London, S.W.15.

TRIUMPH

EXPERTS AGREE

that the latest All-Chain Drive 4 h.p. Triumph with Patent 3-Speed Gear and easy acting Shock Absorber is a revelation in power transmission, and the most perfect system yet devised.

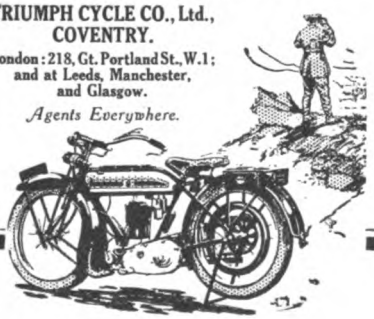
By a rigid adherence to a "quality first" principle the "Trusty Triumph" is built to give satisfaction, and known the world over as the ideal "all purpose" mount.

Illustrated Art Catalogue Post Free.

TRIUMPH CYCLE CO., Ltd., COVENTRY.

London: 218, Gt. Portland St., W.1; and at Leeds, Manchester, and Glasgow.

Agents Everywhere.



THE PERFECT WEARING QUALITY LACES ! !

Hurculaces
BRITISH LACES FOR BOOTS & SHOES

are very smart in appearance and thoroughly reliable, you may pull them as tight as you like and never need have fear of their breaking. Made in many varieties for Ladies' and Men's Boots and Ordinary or Gibson Shoes in all popular shades.

Decide on getting HURCULACES obtainable from Drapers, Outfitters and Boot Dealers.

Manufacturers:
FAIRE BROS. & Co., Ltd., LEICESTER

CUT YOUR OWN HAIR

WITH THE

"JONBUL"

SELF-HAIRCUTTER

Send for one to-day.
Try it at Home Free.
Money Returned if not Satisfied.

10/- POST FREE.

The **"Jonbul"** cuts hair as it combs it, gives a clean, smooth cut without tearing, because of the ingenious arrangement of the blades. Takes off much or little, cannot take off too much, and is instantly adjustable to cut long or short hair. Occasional use keeps hair smart and trim.
Call or **Send 10/-** for Nickel-plated Cutter, 2 extra blades; **12/6**, Silver-plated Cutter, 4 extra blades; **17/6**, Gold-plated Cutter, 6 extra blades.
Each Cutter is fitted on comb and sent in box with directions.

"JONBUL" Self-Haircutter (S.M.6), 44, Hatton Gdn., London, E.C.

Use the **"Mab" DWARF**

KEEN, HANDY, SAFE.

FINEST SHEFFIELD STEEL

Extract from Testimonial:
"I have tried every description of Razor made and found no satisfaction until I obtained a 'MAB.' The ease with which it daily removes my stubborn beard is a marvel. It is a pleasure to use."—J. S., Woolwich.

Prices:— Dwarf Size—Black, **4/6.** Ivory, **9/6.**
Medium Size—Black, **5/6.** Ivory, **10/6.**
Pairs in Cases (Black), Dwarf, **12/6.** Medium, **14/6.**

Of all Cutlers, Ironmongers and Stores, or direct from
MAB CO., 73a, NEWHALL STREET, BIRMINGHAM.
Booklet on Shaving, post free on request.

A good pipe-smoke is something to come back to. You can flirt with the subtleties of Virginia and the delights of Havana, but for real, solid, downright satisfaction—the Pipe!

Do you know Pipe-joy?

Can you truly say you *know* the joy a pipe can give? Is your pipe a comfort when times are ill, blunting the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune? Simple pipe-joy is a state the favoured know.

Some men find the Pipe a nuisance. Making its *real* acquaintance would change it to a blessing.

The Pipe-joy formula is simple. First you need a good pipe—an old Briar preferably, something like the honest chap pictured above. Barney's is the next step—Barney's or some equally good Tobacco. After that there's the filling.

Barney's needs to be filled in a particular way. Put it in the bowl lightly, a little at a time. Take care to get an even, easy pressure throughout the entire depth. Fulfilling these conditions, one match only is likely to make another case of Pipe-joy.

1 oz. to 16

Barney's the Ideal Tobacco

1/1 the oz.

has uncommon character. It *looks* different from the others. Smokes differently too. The cut is coarse, to ensure air-space between the long broad strands after the pipe is filled and lit. This makes for *even burning*.

Then there's the blend. Many choice growths are combined in Barney's. Each contributes something—aroma, flavour, coolness, smoothness, lastingness. The result is near perfection.

Barney's itself is medium. It suits 70% of Pipe smokers uncommonly well. It will probably start a long friendship with you after trial.

The best Shops in most Towns now sell Barney's in its three strengths. If your regular Tobacconist does not yet stock he can get supplies in either strength *specially for you* Ask him to do so.

Barney's and its kindred Tobaccos are sold in 1 oz. lead packets; in Flat 2 oz. Tins for the Pocket; and in "Home" Tins of 4, 8, and 16 ozs. at 1/1 the ounce throughout.

All packets and Tins carry the Guarantee Card. If bought out-of-condition, a fresh supply will be sent immediately and your postage refunded.

(7) *TO THE TRADE.—Supplies of Barney's (medium), Punchbowle (full strength), and Parsons' Pleasure (the mild Barney's) can be obtained through your usual Wholesaler, or direct from the Manufacturers:—*

JOHN SINCLAIR LTD.
National Sales Bureau, 24 Holborn, E.C.1.
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I reduced my weight by 38 lbs. in 40 days, and so that every over-stout person may test this wonderful treatment, I will send you

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I was most miserably fat and tubby but a few years ago. And I looked as miserable as I felt, for not only was I prevented from joining in sports and games with others of my age, but I suffered all the horrors of palpitation, breathlessness, and extreme exhaustion after a little work. An eminent French physician, who had spent many years in the study of this subject, took my case in hand, with astonishing results. Within the very first week I commenced to lose weight, and during the second and third weeks I lost still more, all the while experiencing a great improvement in my health and spirits, until at the end of six weeks I had got rid of no less than 38 lbs. of fat. My friends marvelled at the change, especially as they could plainly see that I was in perfect health, and in fact I was stronger and more vigorous than I had ever been in my life. I could now walk twenty-five miles a day without fatigue, and could play games or work with the strongest.

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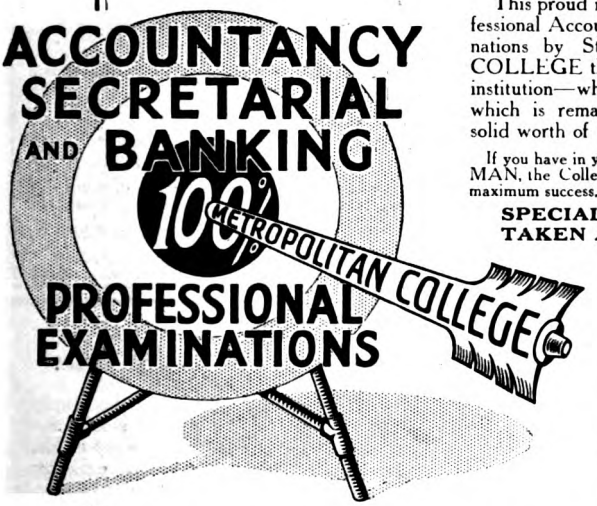

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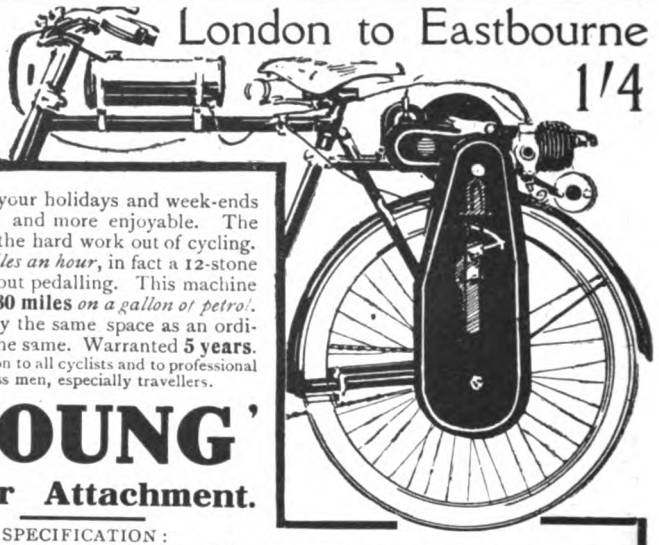

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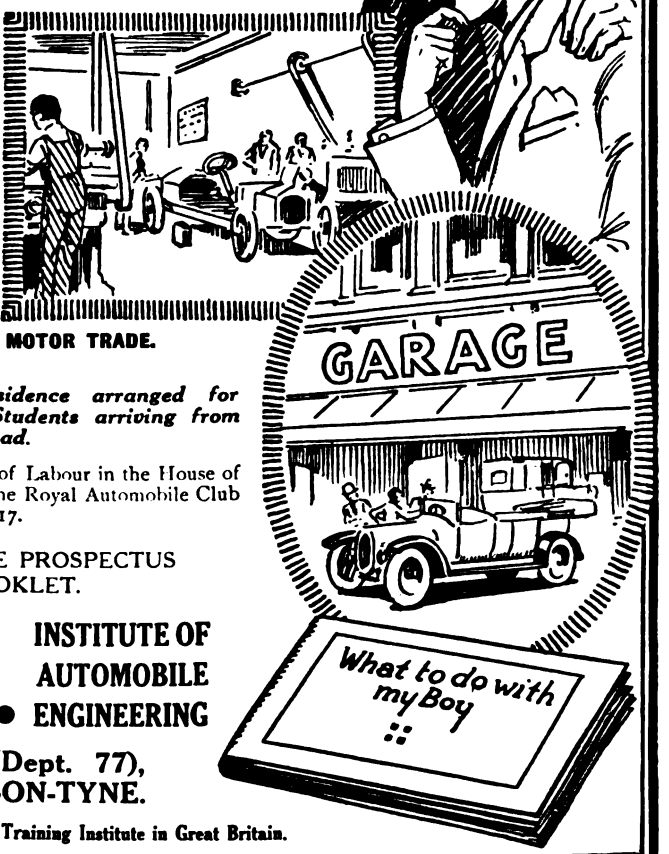

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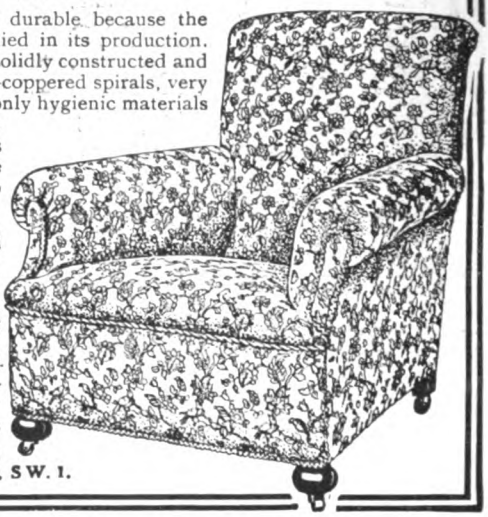

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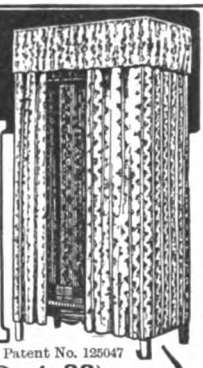

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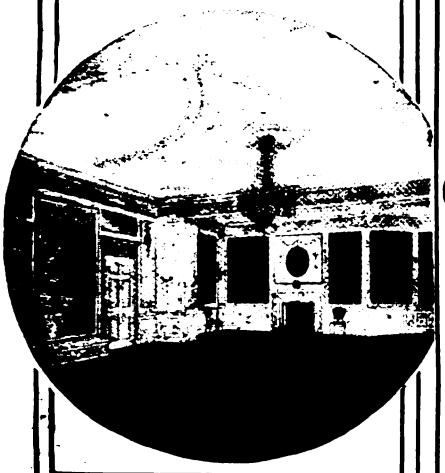

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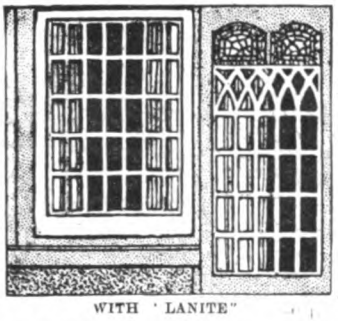

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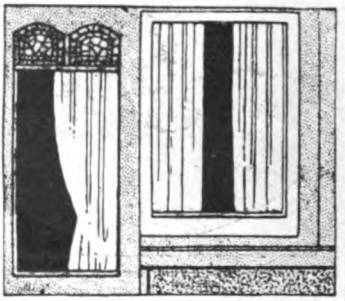

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EVERYONE is agreed that leaded windows are the most picturesque, but hitherto their installation has been so expensive, and could only be carried out by a man trained to the trade.

Now that is all changed with the advent of "Lanite," which is an improved window lead much superior to the ordinary leaded lights, and what is more important still, ever so much cheaper. (Vide Press.)

"LANITE" easy-fix is British made of pure lead and impervious to damp, heat, and cold. Can be purchased from most Stores and Ironmongers. If any difficulty in obtaining, send remittance for complete outfit direct to

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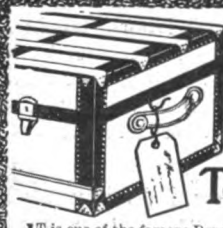

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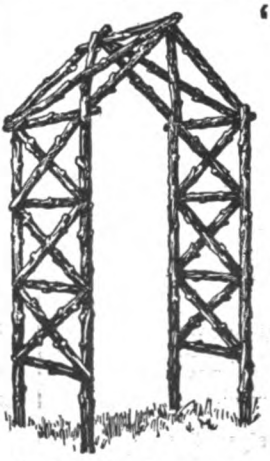

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are all worn in the ordinary footwear without being noticeable. They are obtainable of boot-dealers and chemists everywhere. The Scholl dealer has made a study of the foot and its ailments and will gladly give you advice on your foot trouble, free of charge.

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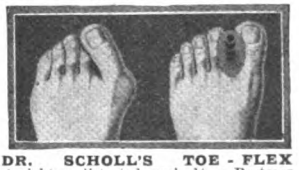

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Most teeth are dimmed more or less by a film. Smokers' teeth often become darkly coated.

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Dental science, after painstaking research, has developed effective ways to fight film. High authorities now approve them, after careful tests.

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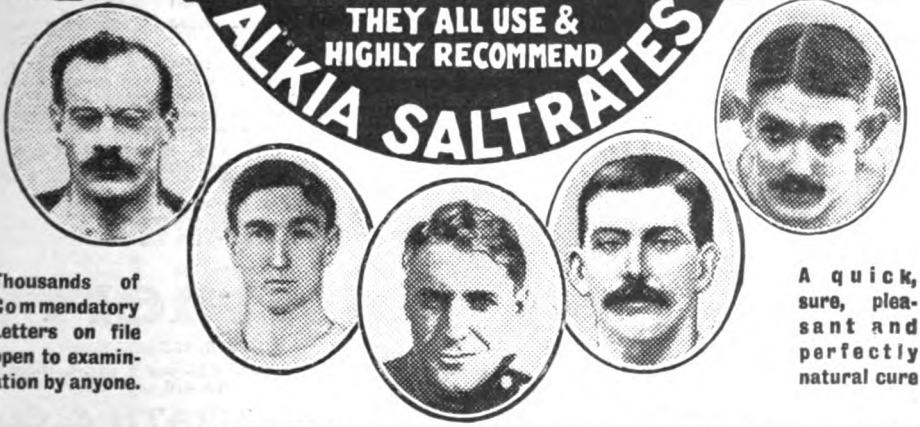

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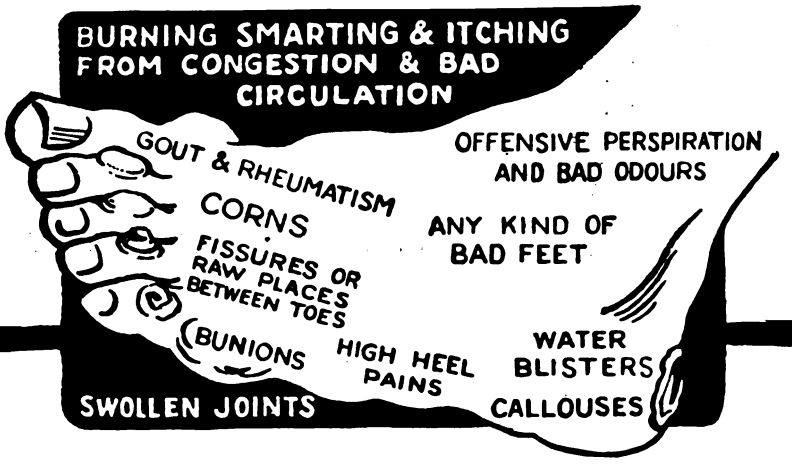

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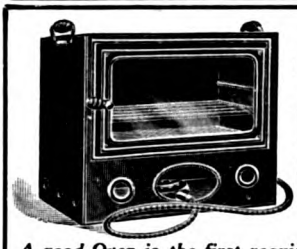

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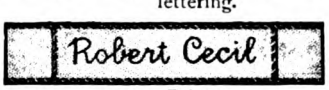

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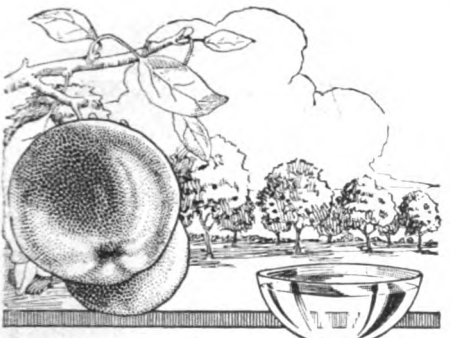

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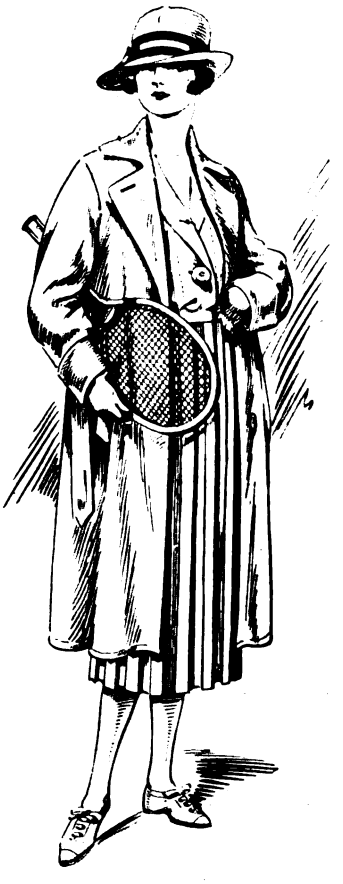

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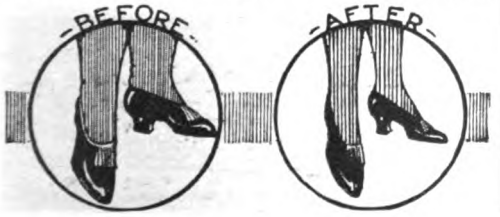

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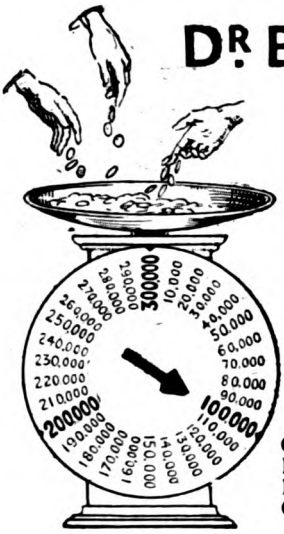

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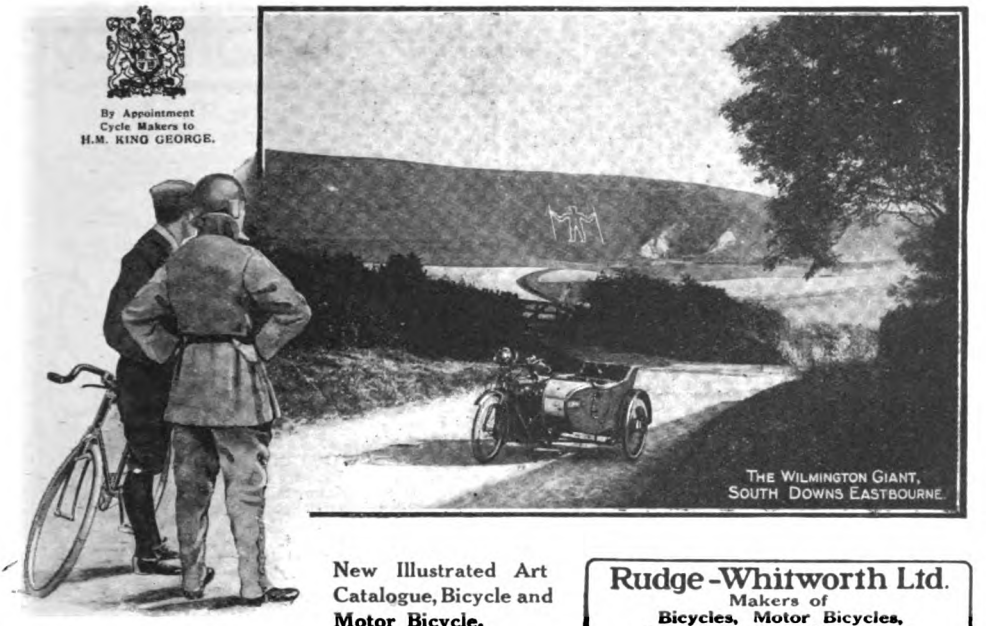

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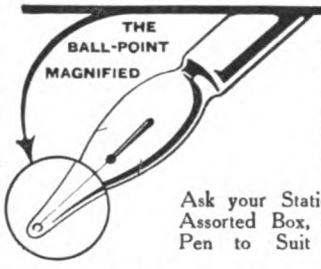

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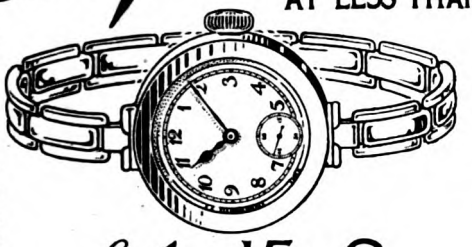

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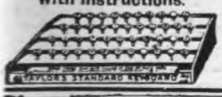

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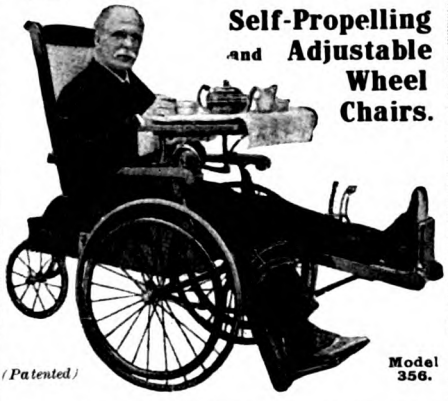

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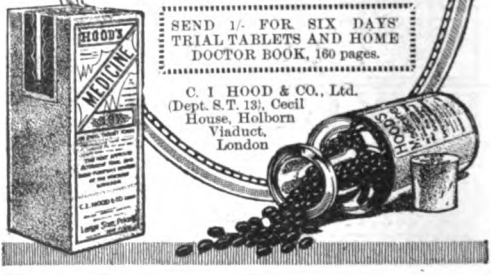

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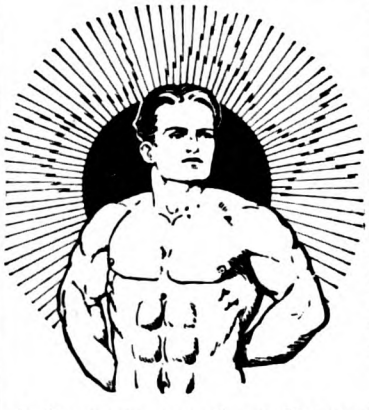

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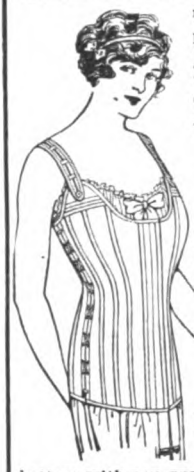

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for July, 1921.

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Frontispiece: "'Where are you going?' 'Home,' he replied, tersely. For a moment they gave each other stare for stare. 'Don't be absurd!' she said."

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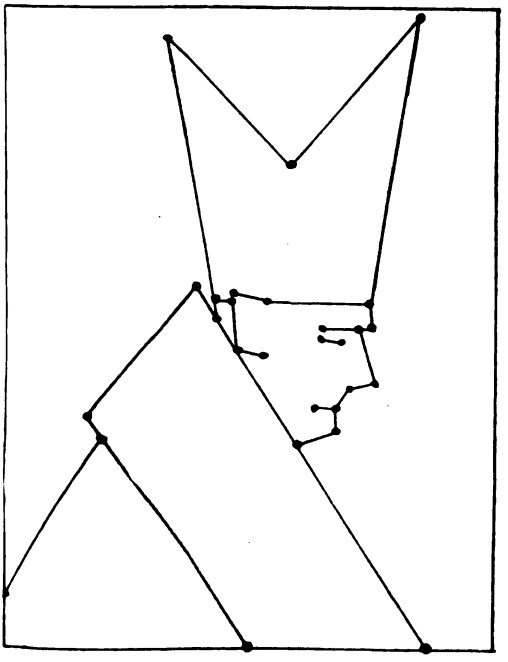
To face back of Frontispiece.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

July, 1921

RESULT OF THE POINT-TO-POINT PORTRAIT COMPETITION.

A very large number of readers entered this competition, of whom fifteen sent in correct solutions. We have therefore decided to divide the three prizes of £10, £5, and £3 among these, each of whom will receive £1 4s. The names and addresses of the winners are:—



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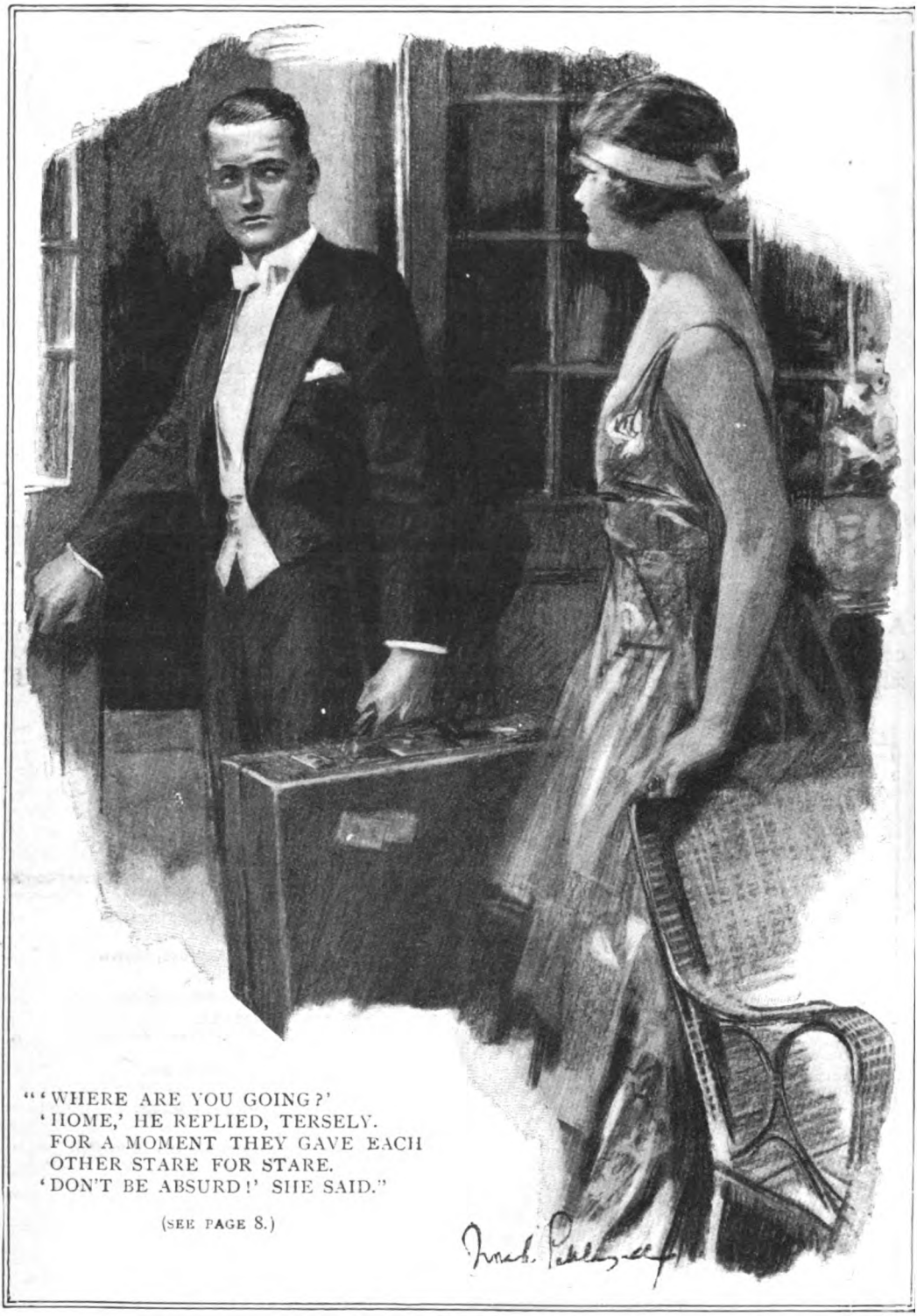

"'WHERE ARE YOU GOING?'
'HOME,' HE REPLIED, TERSELY.
FOR A MOMENT THEY GAVE EACH
OTHER STARE FOR STARE.
'DON'T BE ABSURD!' SHE SAID."

(SEE PAGE 8.)

By Dana Gatlin

ILLUSTRATED BY NORAH SCHLEGEL

HAVE you ever seen a woman, when dressing before a mirror, pause in the act of brushing her hair to gaze at her reflection with a certain arrested, absorbed, dreamy, yet searching expression? Have you seen her turn her head this way and that, pick up a hand-glass and study her profile? If so, you may have wondered. Obviously it is not exigencies of her toilette that have evoked this meticulous scrutiny. Besides, there is an odd kind of look in her eyes, pensive, dreamy, wistful, that women do not bestow upon an ordinary toilette—nor even upon an extraordinary one.

No. That woman is seeking out her romantic possibilities.

If unmarried, she may have some concrete motive, some definite desired end in view. And if married—— Now, do not stop here and decide that this is the kind of story you don't care to read. It is the story of a married woman come to such a moment of pause, but it is not at all an "immoral" story. For there are few women, I claim, who, even after marriage, do not pause, some time or other, to look at themselves with that dreamy, pensive, wistful scrutiny, seeking to know whether the weapons of conquest still are theirs.

Corinna Benson, standing absorbed before her own reflection, would not have wished her lot changed one whit. She had been married nearly three years to her Andy; three years of ups-and-downs, naturally, for Corinna and Andy were but human.

The evening before the Bensons had played bridge with some friends, and a woman, whose name is not important to this narrative, had chanced to mention a man whose name is not important either. Corinna didn't even remember his name overnight, though he was, in a way, the unsuspecting sower of the seed of that discord she came to fear would rupture her entire life. The woman, gossiping lightly, mentioned the man as one invincible to woman's wiles; numerous campaigns had been waged against the citadel of his heart in vain.

The woman turned laughingly to Corinna.

"I wish he could have run up against *you*—in the days before you were married."

That lightly-voiced remark somehow aroused in Corinna two simultaneous but diverse emotions: a flicker of pleased vanity because of the flattering implication, and something else which caused her, bridling a bit, to ask:—

"Why do you say '*before* I was married'?"

"Oh, you're so settled now—you don't know there's a man in the world but Andy."

Corinna, puckering her brows a little, glanced across at her husband.

"Am I so settled as all that?" she asked him.

"I hope so," he responded, smiling at her.

Now, Andy had a nice smile—it was one of the things about him Corinna had fallen in love with; but, just now, curiously, something in it—its bland assurance, serenity, security, what-not—nettled her.

Talk drifted desultorily to other topics; the nameless Gibraltar of masculinity was passed by and forgotten; but a seed had been planted in Corinna, in some vague spot betwixt thought and feeling where such seeds are apt to fall. Yes, Corinna did not remember the invincible one's name, she did not even aspire to meet him in particular; but, next morning, as she dressed before her mirror, she caught herself staring at her own reflection.

Was she so "settled," then? Were all those weapons of allure, once so skilfully hers, now for ever sheathed?

Andy admired her—that she knew. But it *does* strike a woman hard, now and then, that her adored and adoring husband seems to take her charms as a prosaic matter of course—and indisputably his own.

Nevertheless, no helpmeet was ever more solicitous, hovering, and devoted than was Corinna in the days immediately following that brief, stock-taking pause. The Bensons were on the verge of their first long separation; Andy was going on an extended business trip, and he insisted that she should accept a long-standing invitation from an aunt; he would send the car to Pleasantville, fetch Corinna at the end of his business trip, and then they'd motor home together.

Corinna accepted the wisdom of his decision soberly, but she threw her arms about his neck.

"Oh, Andy, I shall be so homesick! I wish I could go with you."

"I can't bear to think of you in those stuffy trains, darling, and knocking about in those sweltering hotels."

"But *you'll* have to knock about in them," she commiserated.

"Oh, I can stand it all right," he said. "Of course I'll miss you like the deuce; but I can stand the discomforts a whole lot better if I know you are cool and comfortable and having a good time."

"But I'll be having a horrible time! I'll be homesick for you every minute, Andy."

The funny part of it was that Andy believed her; he believed her even while, pursuing that absurd practice with which humans profess to disbelieve their dear convictions, he argued that she'd soon be forgetting him altogether.

"You'll be trying out your hand again before you know it," he said, fatuously. "I don't doubt that by the time I show up you'll be wearing a brand-new collection of scalps."

"Oh, Andy!" she reproached.

And the funny thing was that he believed her; and even funnier, that she believed herself. She was sincerely convinced—at the time—that the month for her would be a stretch of grey, lonely, empty days leading up to the hour of seeing Andy again.

THAT prospect tinged over with melancholy the business of buying new clothes for her holiday—and when this delectable business is dulled for whatever reason, it is proof incontestable that the whatever-reason is sincere. You see that I want to prove to you, in the beginning, that Corinna *did* love her husband, and *was* grieved at the spectre of separation, and that she was not guilty of any conscious premeditation as to that which was about to develop to her apparent discredit.

At the farewell, on the platform, her eyes grew misty.

"Buck up!" cheered Andy. "It's only a month. And then we'll have that motor-trip home together."

"Yes, that will be wonderful," she said, bravely.

Throughout her journey Corinna continued wrapped in her mantle of tender dejection. She wondered whether she had remembered to tuck in Andy's digestive tablets, whether she would receive a letter in the morning, whether those seaside girls were as attractive as hearsay made them out. Of course she wanted him to have a good time, but—— It is to her credit that, those first long, dismal hours, she gave not one thought to any possible "good time" she herself might encounter in Pleasantville.

And it is the more to her credit because, once, she *had* had a "good time" in Pleasantville—an uncommonly good time. It was four or five summers ago, before she met Andy, before she had ever thought definitely of marriage and its attendant "settling down."

IT was in Aunt Sarah's car, sitting beside Aunt Sarah herself—a kind, contented, very wise and motherly spinster—that Corinna noticed a young man, crossing the street in front of them, glance up, peer, and then, at the risk of being run down, pause to lift his hat before scurrying out of the way.

"Who was that?" asked Corinna, reflectively. "He looks sort of familiar."

Aunt Sarah smiled. "He ought to," she observed. "I remember he lived on my doorstep the last time you were here."

"There were so many——" said Corinna, puckering her brows.

Aunt Sarah smiled again. "Well, that one's Woodford King," she replied.

"Oh—Woodie!" Corinna's tone dropped a trifle. She vaguely remembered Woodie.

"Woodford is quite a Lothario in the gay married set, I believe," commented Aunt Sarah.

Corinna smiled absently in reply; she was trying to "place" Woodie King more definitely; certainly there had been nothing of the dashing Lothario in the humble young adorer she dimly recollected.

When Aunt Sarah spoke again it seemed on another subject. "I'm glad you married a man like Andy," she said. "So sensible and dependable and stable—it's stability in marriage that makes a woman most happy."

A singularly unwise remark for so wise an onlooker of life as Aunt Sarah! For something in that phrasing—"stability in marriage"—jarred on Corinna.

CORINNA met Woodie a night or so after her arrival at the Club-house dance. She had thought beforehand that any diversion Pleasantville might offer would be savourless, but in one of the new frocks she'd purchased with such little zest she derived an unexpected pleasure from its becomingness. Woodie, on the Club-house porch, told her it looked like a pilfered bit of the shimmering moonlight. Corinna smiled a satisfied smile in the gloom; and she didn't give her dressmaker even half the credit for the compliment. She had danced several times with Woodie, not failing to notice the rather strained interest of other women present. She wasn't completely shelved yet, after all!

She drifted with Woodie out to the shadowy porch. She asked what he'd been doing all these years; and Woodie, with a fair record of achievement to his credit, was not at all loath to tell her. Corinna looked and murmured praise; and then she asked:—

"How has it happened you've never married?"

Now that, on the surface, sounds like a simple and unreprehensible question; and Corinna seemed to ask it frankly enough, but there was an odd little sense of something tentative, expectant, underneath her casual inquiry.

Nor did Woodie refuse that little mute, less-than-implied challenge.

"The girl I'd have wished to marry," he said, throwing away his cigarette and staring at her moodily, "married someone else."

That was an answer, if you please, to satisfy Corinna, and more; to warn her that enough is enough. But the worst feature about a vague, subconscious yearning for flitting Romance is that reason goes to sleep and doesn't tell you when to stop.

Corinna, believing that a mask of impersonality makes such talk all right, looked frankly into his face, and exclaimed:—

"Oh, I'm so sorry! But surely you can find someone else—the world's so full of lovely girls——"

Woodie shook his head gloomily. It's beside the point that, probably, until the day before he hadn't thought of Corinna for years. We all know what moonlight, night scents, the sound of far-off music, and a pair of shining eyes—not to mention that spice of adventure—can do. So Woodie shook his head gloomily, and lied:—

"No; I don't think I'll ever forget her."

"What was she like?" asked Corinna, softly.

"She was very beautiful," he said, staring at her. "As beautiful as *you*."

Despite the daring of that last, it gave Corinna a certain odd sense of relief. Switching herself off as a separate personal entity in this way somehow lessened her too-absolute identification with his mourned lost one. So, relieved, she could say, in a matter-of-fact way:—

"*Me?* Why, there's nothing beautiful about *me!*"

For answer Woodie laughed.

And Corinna laughed too. "What makes you say *I'm* beautiful?" she demanded, as if amusedly amazed that such a preposterous claim could be made for her.

From time immemorial women have played that teasing line; and from time immemorial men have swallowed the bait just as the soft-eyed, protesting, astute casters have known they would.

Corinna, sitting there listening to her own praise, was feeling a peculiar kind of gratification that only women may know. It was not that she was especially happy—indeed, she wrote Andy, and truthfully, that she didn't really enjoy that Club-house dance because he was so far away. Yet she was basking in a kind of glowing satisfaction. This feeling had nothing to do with Woodie King, specifically; and nothing to do with the things he said, in particular. No; the individual, or the words he says, often do not matter. It is a contact, a spark, a vague, quickened something, which proves to us that something we feared was lost is not yet gone.

At home that night, after writing Andy, she kissed his photograph and went to bed, reflecting she had promised to go for a ride in Woodie's car before breakfast. And in the next four weeks Corinna motored with Woodie, played golf with Woodie, danced with Woodie, and sat talking with Woodie in sequestered corners till Pleasantville began to nudge and Aunt Sarah to lecture.

IT was all just a leading-up to the day when Andy, fagged and "jumpy," but smiling and ardent-eyed, arrived in Pleasantville to carry off his Corinna. He arrived late in the afternoon, and Corinna had planned to meet his train with their own car, which was there awaiting the anticipated trip home. But she had stayed out on the lake longer than she thought; when she discovered the hour there wasn't time to get the car from the garage, and she was grateful that Woodie—who had been present on the lake, of course!—offered her the use of his.

She hadn't dreamed she would be so glad to see Andy. At the first sight of him a wave of ineffable tenderness swept over her, and shone effulgently in her eyes. And Andy, seeing that look, believed himself to be the happiest man in the world as he rode away.

Of course, he didn't know it was Woodie King's car—he didn't even know there was a Woodie King infesting the earth—yet; and he had other things to talk about than the car they chanced to be riding in; and Corinna didn't think it the moment to start explanations as to why she hadn't brought down their own car.

She wasn't pleased, as they drew up in front of Aunt Sarah's, to see the car's owner in the midst of a gay group. But she introduced Andy all round, and tried not to view the intruders distastefully as they chattered inconsequences: "How lucky that Mr. Benson had got in in time for the Club dance that night!"—"Couldn't he be persuaded to stay more than just two days?"—"Everyone would miss Corinna—she'd been the life of everything."

And someone, of course, had to smile, and add:—

"It's a good thing you came to look after your wife, Mr. Benson."

"Yes?" said Andy, smiling good-naturedly.

"Woodie's a devil with the ladies," the prattler went on, "and that old boy-and-girl sweetheart thing, you know."

"Oh, yes," said Andy. "And which one's 'Woodie'?"

He was still smiling good-naturedly, but Corinna observed him straighten in his chair and turn to regard the indicated Lothario.

Corinna had been reared to act like a lady, but, at that moment, she could have kicked the prattling idiot. Not to mention the supreme joy she would have derived from kicking the complacent Woodie himself.

"Who is this Woodie fellow, anyway?"

The question was on the end of Andy's tongue, but he kept it from rolling off into speech. A curious, tight little stricture of reserve held him. It wasn't that he was at all jealous—the glow he had caught in Corinna's eyes at the station told him he needn't be jealous of all the Woodies in the whole world.

Meanwhile Aunt Sarah was commenting on Andy's tired appearance. And then Corinna began to commiserate him deliciously. The poor dear worked too hard—the motor trip home was just the thing for him—she was looking forward to it, too—it would be wonderful.

"*Tell me something about this Woodie fellow!*" It still burned on his tongue; but aloud, following her trend, he asked:—

"Is the car in good order?"

"Oh, yes, splendid!" Corinna assured him. She had had it thoroughly looked over at the garage—they could start out in it this minute, if necessary.

It was at this juncture that Aunt Sarah was guilty of an unwonted tactless question—or was she so naive as she seemed?

"I thought you were going to take it down to meet Andy," she remarked. "How did you happen to go in Woodford's car?"

Woodie's name at last! But Andy couldn't have claimed he was pleased at the connection with which it came—it was in that fellow's car Corinna had driven to meet him! He had ridden in the fellow's car! But he tried to make his tone easy as he seconded Aunt Sarah's question:—

"Yes; why didn't you bring our own car, Corinna?"

To his surprise a flush spread slowly over her face as, crumbling a bit of cake in her fingers, she replied:—

"I found I didn't have time to go to the garage. You see, we were out on the lake, and I didn't realize it was so late until——"

"I see," said Andy.

He didn't intend his voice to be so caustic; he flattered himself that he was maintaining admirable self-control. But something in his tone made Corinna look up at him wistfully, pleadingly.

"Please *do* see, Andy. It wasn't that I wasn't *anxious* to meet you. When I discovered I was late, the lake and—and everything seemed all at once hateful. My only thought was to get to the station in time."

"But you didn't have to get there in *that* car. You could have taken a taxi."

"Taxis don't grow as thick in Pleasantville as in town, Andy," she explained, still mollifying and wistful.

"Well, anyway, you didn't have to subject me to riding in that fellow's car!"

Corinna stared at him, amazed at the sudden mystifying explosion.

"But why do you object so to riding in Woodie's car?"

Why, indeed! Andy, just then, couldn't have explained coherently even to himself.

But he did object; violently. And he objected to the soft, placating, determinedly reasonable way in which she went on :—

" There's nothing for us to quarrel over. Woodie is just an old friend who——"

" So I infer ! " he cut in acidly.

At that, Corinna's softness began, almost imperceptibly, to stiffen.

" Well, let's not air our quarrels in public, at any rate," she said, with assumed sweetness, rising from the table. " If you'll excuse me, I'll run upstairs to dress."

Alone with Aunt Sarah, Andy felt no better, because he felt constrained to mumble awkward, shamed, inadequate apologies. That wise, comprehending spinster looked a little worried when, shortly after Andy had betaken his cigar out to the porch, the telephone rang, and the maid, answering, called up to Corinna that a gentleman wished to speak to her. Aunt Sarah hoped it wasn't Woodie calling up about some triviality.

But it was just that.

When Corinna went to answer at the upstairs connection, she was already in a state of offended dignity, wounded tenderness, dull resentment. On the very threshold of their reunion, he could act like that—irritable, suspicious. To think he'd stoop to jealousy of a Woodie King ! At the moment she hated the local fascinator with a deep, cold, contemptuous hatred.

Such was her feeling toward Woodie when, going to the upstairs extension and taking up the receiver from the hook, she heard Woodie's voice over the wire.

" That you, Corinna ? "

Her impulse was to snap back some retort which would in a measure relieve her emotions. But before she could speak she was arrested by a noise in the mechanism of the telephone—the minutest of sounds, just the delicate ghost of a click. She caught her breath and listened. Silence. But she knew what that furtive click had meant—

"'The girl I'd have wished to marry,' he said, staring at her moodily, 'married someone else.'"

knew it just as well as though she'd seen Andy's stealthy hand on the receiver downstairs. So he was eavesdropping!—he had descended to that! He, her husband, had stooped to spy on her, his wife! He should not be disappointed, then! Let him hear something worth his despicable espionage!

She made her voice warm and vibrant.

"Yes, Woodie; I was hoping you'd call up."

Woodie gave a little satisfied laugh. "What—with your husband home?"

Corinna laughed back, a low, amused ripple; and she said, deliberately:—

"Oh, a husband's not such a novelty after one's been married a few years. What did you want, Woodie?"

"Oh, I thought I'd make sure of some dances to-night. Of course I can't hope for the first one—now."

"Why not?" asked Corinna, sweetly.

"Why, I supposed your husband——"

"Fiddlesticks!" she cut in. "You'll have the first dance, as you've always had it."

Then, not daring to trust Woodie longer, or herself either, she hastily said "*au revoir*." Considering that she had wanted to give Andy something worth listening to, she should have felt happier as she continued her toilet. But she didn't.

SHE could hear Andy dressing in the adjoining room. She was glad his bags had been placed in there; despite her tingling indignation, her high bravado, she preferred not to face him alone just at present. She completed her toilette with hurrying, nervous fingers, and hastened downstairs.

Her uneasy thoughts skimmed a gamut of unpleasant surmises, but never did they reckon on his doing what he did do. She was pensively perusing a rising moon, but her dreamy pose was somewhat jarred by hearing an object slammed down hard on the porch-floor. She turned her head, and beheld her husband, in a dinner-coat as if ready for the dance; but she saw, even in that dim light, that his emotional excitement far exceeded her own: he was pale, his eyes were burning, his jaw set, and his hands twitching. And why the suit-case?—that untimely adjunct struck her as somehow ominous.

"Why, Andy," she said, trying to make her tone light, "what on earth are you going to do with that suit-case?"

"I'm going to put it in the car."

"The car?" sincerely amazed.

"Yes, the car," he replied, grimly. "I've telephoned for it."

"Why, where are you going?" forgetting to consider what would be the most advantageous tone to use.

"Home," he replied, tersely.

For a minute they gave each other stare for stare; then she tried to laugh.

"Don't be absurd!" she said.

"We've hardly time to discuss absurdities just now," he returned. "I'll be starting in about five minutes. If you care to go along, you'd better be getting some wraps together."

Again she tried to laugh, but, looking at him there, white, stern-lipped, square-jawed in the moonlight, a frightened tremor ran over her. "This is war!" she thought. But, not being one who accepted defeat easily, she swiftly altered her demeanour; innocent, bewildered, amused astonishment gave way to open anger.

"You're going too far—I won't stand this, you know."

"Won't stand what?" he inquired, unintimidated.

"Your trying to make me look a fool—before my own relatives and friends."

"It isn't I who have made you look a fool," he returned. "I've had to stand a few things myself—damned unpleasant things. But I'm at the end of it now. I'm going home to-night, and if you're wise you'll come along. That's straight."

"You're a bully!" she exploded, with rising passion which couldn't cover up her own secret fear. "You're simply a bully! What right have you to insult me like this?"

"Don't talk like a child. No one's more concerned about your dignity than I am—that's the trouble. I'm fool enough to feel it when I see you insulting yourself."

Corinna stood aghast; never had she dreamed that Andy, so kind, so gentle, so loving, could turn on her like this. She felt lost, at sea, not mistress of herself.

Just then a familiar chug-chug was heard round the corner.

"Here's the car," said Andy, coldly. "I'll give you five minutes to make up your mind."

As he picked up his suit-case and stalked down the steps, he was thinking—not too jubilantly:—

"She's beaten; she knows she's got to back down."

But Corinna did not admit herself beaten yet. Miserable, heartsick, fearful but defiant, she turned back to her chair. Never, never, never would she give in!

It was then that Aunt Sarah, emerging from the shadows where she had kept unobtrusive and forgotten, approached the stiffened figure.

"Don't do anything you'll regret, Corinna. It may seem hard—unfair and humiliating, but I think you'd better do as he says."

"Never!—never!"

"Don't go if you don't want to, dear. But I think it's now or never."

Corinna couldn't resist a quick, startled upward glance.

"I mean," Aunt Sarah went on, earnestly, "that if you don't go now, you won't go until you *ask* to go. And you'll find that even harder than this."

Corinna still stared up with that startled expression, mute, trembling, terrified.

"You see," continued Aunt Sarah, "for all he seems so easy-going and compliant, Andy would be like rock once he set his mind. He'll be starting in a minute. He *will* start—make no mistake about that. Those eyes of yours have got about everything you've ever wanted, but they won't help you now. Andy hasn't that jaw for nothing."

"But—my trunks——" temporized Corinna, sobbingly, angrily, fearfully.

"I'll send them on. Run for a wrap."

Corinna ran.

AT any normal time, and as a disinterested onlooker, Corinna could have laughed at the absurd spectacle they must have presented starting out on that long trip: the man at the wheel in his dinner-coat, the woman rigidly beside him in a pink taffeta frock under her coat, and on her head a silly little cap-thing such as women, that summer, wore over their evening coiffures. But Corinna, as you can imagine, was in no mood for laughter. Then, to her mental sufferings physical discomfort gradually added itself; she grew chilly. But she'd have died rather than tell Andy she was cold; rather than address one word to him till he spoke first. But Andy gave no indication of speaking. Mute, stern, immovable, he humped there over the steering-wheel, his eyes fixed on the road ahead.

They had not exchanged one word when, in the bright sunlight of a glorious morning, they climbed from their cramped positions and—still in pink taffeta and dinner-coat—entered a wayside hotel.

At the desk Andy asked for two rooms.

"You'd better order yourself some breakfast," he said, as they went upstairs. Those were the first words that had been spoken.

Corinna hadn't the faintest notion she ever could eat again, but she'd have choked to death rather than not have an item for her breakfast on Andy's bill—a good staggering item, too! She was glad the laden tray was on view when there came a knock at the door and Andy appeared. He was carrying a tailored dress.

"I put this in my suit-case," he informed her briefly. "You'd better buy yourself a hat somewhere while I'm seeing to the car."

She didn't reply.

"Have you any money?" he asked.

It happened that she had none—of course he *knew* she wouldn't have!—but she was resolved not to speak.

He tossed a few notes on the bureau. She longed to toss them back at him, but the picture of herself riding in daylight in that ridiculous little lace cap restrained her.

"Please try to be ready within an hour," he said, and left the room.

All that day they rode without speech. Her emotions to Corinna seemed to be burning her up. Ceaselessly her mind ran round the circle of his initial fault, his injustice, his callousness, his cruelty. That he could subject her to such torture——

Meanwhile, Andy, attending mechanically to the business of driving, was doing some feeling and thinking of his own. He would never be able to understand completely that mad, shamed, but resistless impulse which had driven him to pick up the downstairs receiver. Somewhat better he understood the sudden rage, when he overheard her planning to carry on her flirtation before the very eyes of her husband—even making light of him to that smirking nincompoop!—which had lifted him up into almost an alien personality. He hardly recognized himself in the stonily furious being who had ascended Aunt Sarah's stairs and gone about donning the polite evening garb of ultra-civilized males. It was, in fact, while he was putting on his dress waistcoat that, all in a flash, it came to him what to do: the resolution, born full-grown in a second, as Minerva sprang full-armed from the brow of Jupiter, to carry her away, willy-nilly, from this accursed spot at once.

Even after he had proved his domination—the proper though harsh domination of the superior and outraged male—his cold wrath did not abate. It rode with him in the driver's seat throughout that interminable night. It re-entered the car with him after the stop for breakfast—and the hat. He ruminated sourly, grimly. He had vanquished her, as should be. The very costume she now wore, that blue serge, was a token; the appropriate headgear, bought with his money she must perforce accept, was another. Her mere presence was proof superlative. Yes; she might be indignant, sullen, even on the verge of tears—but she was there.

It was somewhere in the middle of the forenoon that his harsh reflections of the conqueror began subtly to change colour. It would be hard to say precisely what brought about this gradual softening.

Of course he mustn't unbend too quickly; there were a lot of things that needed explaining—she *had* been in the wrong, and she must justify herself to him of her own accord. And he must maintain his prestige. But there was such a thing as driving a woman too

hard; he didn't want ever to get in the way of playing the brute to Corinna. And she, for all her provocativeness and baffling perversities, was just a delicate, feminine, loving little thing.

At noon, when they stopped in a village hostelry for lunch—a very bad lunch—Andy went to telephone ahead for accommodation for the coming night. But his order included certain "extras" which had nothing to do with bare essentials.

That is how it happened, when Corinna, still rigid and silent, entered her room that evening, her nose and eyes were assailed by a fragrant, colourful bombardment; a whole battalion of roses was formed there for a massed attack. Corinna paused stock-still for a minute, and then marched to a window, flung it up, and hurled the enemy into a crimson-streaking rout.

Andy, hesitantly, hopefully, opened the door at that moment. It seemed she must have thrown out some vital part of him also, such was his sudden sick void of disappointment; but he tried to look at his watch in an offhand manner.

"I thought we might have dinner served in our room," he went on. "It would be simpler."

It was then that Corinna spoke, for the first time for nearly twenty-four hours.

"I prefer to eat alone," she said.

She turned to move slowly, gracefully, indifferently, toward her bathroom. Andy watched her until, just before she disappeared, he made himself say:—

"Just a minute, Corinna."

She turned. "What is it?"

He looked down into her eyes, those deep, innocent-looking eyes so deceiving in their softness. They could play the devil, those eyes! They had played the devil with him. Had they played the devil with Woodie?

"Did that fellow make love to you?" he suddenly burst out, to his own surprise.

She didn't trouble to answer.

"Well? You know he did—why not admit it?"

Still only that limpid, almost expressionless stare.

"You know he did!" he reiterated. "He's that kind—one of those cads who go round making love to pretty women!"

Corinna was, indeed, a pretty woman. Never had she seemed so lovely to him as at that minute, standing looking back at him,

"'Just a minute, Corinna.' She turned.

provocatively soft but indifferent, scarcely three feet away but separated from him by thousands of miles. And when a dreamy, reminiscent little smile touched her lips, stole into her eyes, it made her all the lovelier; but it made him want to shake her.

"Oh, you needn't smile!—you needn't think I'm complimenting you!" he jeered. And then, compelled against his will, he demanded again:—

What is it?' Did that fellow make love to you?' he suddenly burst out."

"What were you doing all those weeks—dancing with him every night and sitting round in dark nooks, I suppose?"

And then, explosively:—

"Did he kiss you?"

She only smiled.

"You shall answer me, by God! Did he kiss you?"

Then, at last, she spoke, unemotionally:—

"If you'd been willing to stay on at Pleasantville a little longer, you might have found out for yourself. You could have listened at the keyhole, or had a detectaphone installed."

"My God!" he thought, "I'd like to take her by those shoulders and shake her!"

That is what he thought; but all he did was to swing on his heel and bang the door behind him.

In another room, forgetting that such a function as dinner existed, Andy sat with his head in his hands and viewed the situation. One minute he told himself that her conduct was contemptible, and that he wouldn't forgive her until she came crawling on knees of explanation and repentance. The next minute he wondered whether he had driven her to a false stand by his high-handedness.

He felt sure that fundamentally she loved him; that affair, or whatever it was, with the Woodie whipper-snapper was just some bit of foolishness brought about by idleness, propinquity, and such. She certainly owed him a fair explanation; but he'd probably driven her too hard—Corinna couldn't stand that kind of treatment.

Then, whether after minutes or hours he did not know, he rose; calling himself an idiot, he moved towards the door.

He didn't know what he was going to say to her—she could be very "difficult" on occasion. And he startled himself when,

diffidently, eagerly, he knocked, and opened her door, with what he did say.

" Corinna, darling," he blurted out, " I've been a fool ! "

Now Corinna had been spending those minutes—or hours—in a manner no happier than his own. After he had banged the door behind him, she had promptly flung herself on the bed to weep.

At first her sobs were a convulsive outburst of all her pent-up humiliation, self-pity, and frantic revolt. But, as her violent emotion exhausted itself, a more quiescent but bitter melancholy took its place. To such depths had their love, once seeming so beautiful and enduring, finally descended. They had had a " scene." He who had once represented for her all that is gentle and solicitous and adoring had shouted at her. He had deliberately, wantonly, cruelly browbeaten her.

But, even while she shuddered, in retrospect and dreadful anticipation, a curious, wavering, compelling admiration for his overriding masculine brutality rose up in her. No ; Andy would never accept any tomfoolery with complacence. However, she reflected with tearful satisfaction that she had given him back blow for blow. She thought of him slamming out of the room ; he wouldn't come bullying back in a hurry.

Then a hideous supposition flashed across her mind : suppose he *didn't* come back ? What was it Aunt Sarah had said about square-jawed men when aroused ? What if he were aroused to the point where he'd never make another overture ? For those roses had been an overture, and hastily, unthinkingly, she had rebuffed it. Had she been too impulsive, tried him too far ? Already he might be on his way home. It wasn't like Andy to leave her stranded in an hotel, but his whole recent performance had been utterly unlike the kind, patient Andy she had always known. What might he not be doing now ? She had played up against that square jaw too far. What *was* it Aunt Sarah had said ?—something about her eyes usually getting her what she wanted, but that they wouldn't help now.

Outside, the light of the long summer evening was failing ; the windows became blurred dim squares. There came a tapping on the door, and, grateful for the gloom, Corinna hastily dried her eyes ; despite a surge of her heart she thought it must be a maid, and didn't reply, hoping the servant would go away.

But there was the sound of a handle turning—Corinna shut her eyes—of the door softly opening.

And then, a voice, of nervous gruffness :—

" Corinna, darling, I've been a fool ! "

Her heart then gave such a plunge and flight as she didn't know was possible ; but she controlled her voice—equably, sweetly, amusedly, tenderly, she murmured :—

" You have been, dear—an atrocious, fiendish, darling fool. Come closer so I can forgive you."

And when, obeying, he started to mutter, " Then you *didn't*——," she interrupted him.

" Of course I didn't—didn't *anything*. But let's not talk about that now. We can explain later. Anyway, in this funny, blind, mixed-up world of humans, things are often hard to explain—even to oneself."

Which observation Andy, with Corinna in his arms and peace thereby mysteriously in his soul, did not then attempt to refute. Anyhow, it was a perfectly true observation ; Corinna had her moments of wisdom. Yet she might have been heard, scarcely a minute later, voicing a preposterous statement.

She had, as Andy bent to kiss her, suddenly burst into tears—an entirely different, not very unhappy, kind of weeping. With contrition ineffable he sought to soothe her, inwardly berating himself for his monstrosity toward this fragile, sensitive little feminine thing who had entrusted herself to his keeping. He held her close till the reactionary spasm had passed, and then he murmured :—

" We'll never let anything like this happen again, will we, darling ? "

It was then that she voiced her preposterous remark :—

" No, we'll never misunderstand each other again." She said it as though convinced her statement held the last shred of truth—not to mention probability.

PRESENTLY Andy bethought himself of the belated dinner, and moved cheerfully to the telephone.

Corinna watched him with a serene smile which covered a certain gently triumphant trend of thought. He had come back to her. It was he who had made the definite overture for reconciliation—despite what Aunt Sarah had said. To be sure, he had bullied her somewhat, but then he did have an amount of justification ; she didn't think she'd care for a man who could act tamely in such circumstances. It all only proved he loved her ; and she loved him, too. He ought to know, the goose, that all other men didn't count a fig's worth to her. They didn't ; she never wanted to take part in a cheap little flirtation again—sufficient to know she *could* attract men if she wanted to. But she didn't want to. All that nonsense was past. She wanted only her Andy—her kind, clumsy, uncomprehending, adoring and adored Andy. And she didn't mind his being square-jawed in the least ; that quality was admirable, and she could manage it all right—despite what Aunt Sarah had said.

The Paul Lamerie Cup

by HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL

Illustrated by JOHN CAMPBELL

I.

QUINNEY gazed lovingly at a silver cup which stood upon his desk. The marks were almost obliterated but not quite. With the aid of a pocket lens he could make out a "C," and the lion's head *erased*, and the figure of Britannia. These were enough to date the cup exactly. It had been made in 1718. Of far deeper interest was the maker's mark —LA surmounted by a cross and crown and with the fleur-de-lys below.

"It's a Paul Lamerie right enough," muttered the dealer.

And no vandal of a later period had touched it.

Quinney's lips watered at sight of it. This, in his opinion, was a 'gem of purest ray serene." The cup had two handles and a top. The dealer ran his fingers over the sharp edges of the acanthus leaves upon the handles.

"What a craftsman," he thought.

Nevertheless he frowned as he gloated over it.

Queer objects are brought to famous dealers by queer people and at queer times. Some of the dealers ask questions; some don't. But, in the trade generally, it is admitted, not without reluctance, that questions ought to be asked and answered satisfactorily. Upon the previous evening a Frenchman had drifted into the Soho Square establishment, carrying a box. He had shown the cup to Quinney and, amazing fact, had left it with him. This might be a tribute to Quinney's reputation or merely a carefully considered ruse to establish confidence. But the Frenchman, who spoke English perfectly, had given another reason.

"I am staying at an hotel, Mr. Quinney. You have a safe. The cup will be more secure in your custody."

"Is it yours?" asked Quinney.

"Yes—it is mine. Your name was mentioned to me as a dealer to be trusted. I thought you might like to buy the cup or to sell it for me on commission."

The owner of the cup spoke with suave indifference.

Quinney was slightly puzzled. Occasionally he bought and sold valuable plate, but he dealt as a rule in furniture and porcelain, not disdaining, however, miniatures and pictures. He said, curtly:—

"Why didn't you go to one of the big silversmiths?"

The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders.

"But I don't know your big silversmiths. A friend of mine gave me your name. *Voilà!*"

As he spoke he laid a thin card upon the desk.

"Your card?" asked Quinney.

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The Frenchman smiled.

" Perfectly ; it is mine."

" If you leave the cup with me, you will want a receipt, eh ? "

" That is quite unnecessary. I will do myself the pleasure of calling again to-morrow, at eleven. By that time, Monsieur, you will, perhaps, have satisfied yourself in regard to the value of the cup."

Smilingly, he withdrew.

Upon the card, in small script, was inscribed :—

Le Marquis de Chantal.

And in the corner of the card, *Cercle Royal.*

Now Quinney had a good friend and patron, the Marquess of Mel, who happened to be in London at his house in St. James's Square. After his Gallic visitor had gone Quinney rang up that noble and puissant prince, and had a reassuring chat with him over the telephone. Lord Mel did not know Monsieur de Chantal, but he knew of him. He was the head of an ancient family, long established in La Vendée, and well known in Paris. It was quite likely that he possessed a Paul Lamerie cup, and he might wish to dispose of it quietly. Lord Mel concluded : " French plate fetches a ridiculous price in London, and it is probable that English plate is much undervalued in Paris."

Quinney thanked his kind patron for this enlightening information.

NEXT morning, when he examined the cup, he came to the conclusion that nothing out of the ordinary had taken place. Paul Lamerie had been the famous silversmith of his day. He had worked, it is true, most of his life in London, but some of his masterpieces must have been bought by Frenchmen. An ancestor of the Marquis had bought the cup which an impoverished descendant wished to sell. To get the biggest price for so beautiful a specimen, it might have been wiser to put it up at Christie's. But that meant a publicity from which Monsieur de Chantal might shrink.

Quinney waited for him with impatience.

At eleven punctually the gentleman presented himself.

" Well," he asked, " what do you think of it ? "

" It's a very handsome cup," said Quinney, cautiously, " and it weighs nearly a hundred ounces, Troy."

" Do you care to buy it ? "

" What do you ask for it, my lord ? "

He was not quite sure whether a mere French marquis should be so addressed, but he deemed it expedient to be on the safe side.

" What do I ask ? But I leave that to you. To set a price, I mean. Then I can take your money or—or take away the cup. It's a valuable piece of plate, but I have no *expertise* in your English plate. I come to you because my friends tell me you are to be trusted."

Quinney looked slightly disconcerted. Such awkward exigencies were not altogether new to him. And if he named too low a figure this aristocratic gentleman might smile sweetly, shake his handsome head, and vanish with the cup. But he had made up his mind what the cup was worth to him, and it was possible that the Marquis had other objects of *vertu* which he might bring to a trustworthy dealer.

" I'll give you five hundred pounds, not a penny more or less. But if I buy it I hope to get much more, you understand. I shall hang on to it till I do. That's my way of doing business, my lord. Sooner or later a customer comes along who pays my figure. Till then I have the pleasure of looking at a ' gem.' "

" I quite understand. For family reasons, Mr. Quinney, I do not wish to put my cup up at Christie's."

At this moment the telephone bell tinkled sharply.

" Please excuse me," said Quinney.

Monsieur de Chantal bowed. Quinney picked up the receiver and placed it to his ear. A second later he said, with marked deference :—

" The Duke of Bellingham has asked if you are here, my lord. His Grace wishes to speak to you."

" Ah, yes ; I told him to ring me up."

Quinney then listened to the following :—

" Is that you, my dear Bellingham ? It is de Chantal speaking. Yes. I will lunch with you at Claridge's, with pleasure. What ? No, no—quite impossible. I'm returning to Paris to-night. *Bon ! A tout-à-l'heure !* "

He hung up the 'phone and turned politely to Quinney.

" Very many thanks," he murmured. " What were we talking about ? Ah ! the cup, to be sure. You offer me five hundred. I will take your cheque on one condition : you will not make public the fact that I—I " —he slightly emphasized the personal pronoun—" have been compelled to part with my beloved cup. I have others, and it will hardly be missed at home, still——"

His pleasant voice melted upon a silence. Quinney nodded.

" That's quite all right."

The cheque was duly made out, and a receipt signed. The Frenchman left the sanctuary. From the Georgian windows, Quinney could see him step into a smart car.

" A good morning's work," said Quinney to himself, as he sat down to enjoy full possession of the Paul Lamerie cup.

"Quinney then listened to the following: 'Is that you, my dear Bellingham? It is de Chantal speaking. Yes. I will lunch with you at Claridge's, with pleasure.'"

II.

HE was still admiring the superlative craftsmanship when Susan, his wife, came bustling into the sanctuary. Since the marriage of her daughter, Mrs. Quinney had interested herself in "waifs and strays," creatures of flesh and blood, in salient contrast to what she stigmatized as "sticks and stones"—the "things" beloved by the famous dealer.

"Look at that, Susie!"

Mrs. Quinney eyed the cup with malevolence. After long and sad experience, she was well aware that a new "first favourite" had just been enthroned in her lord's affections. Nevertheless, being a discreet woman, with an object in view that justified dissimulation, she said, pleasantly:—

"I *am* looking at it. You didn't get that given away with a packet o' tea, did you?"

"I paid five hundred pounds for it, old girl."

"And what will you sell it for, Joe?"

"Maybe it's not for sale."

"Another idol, I suppose?"

"You're as near right as a woman can be. Makes me feel a younger and better man just to pass my fingers over it."

He caressed it lovingly as he spoke. Susan sniffed and then smiled.

"I want some money out of you, Joe, for my Rags and Tatters Home. If you're really feeling younger and better, *and better*," she repeated, "you can afford to be generous."

"I sha'n't grudge a pound or two," said Quinney, superbly.

"A pound or two! I want fifty pounds, Joe. That's a tenth of the profit you mean to make on that cup."

"Fifty pounds——! Dotty, you are——!"

"Yes—we're two of a kind. You go crazy over graven images; I'm dotty, as you put it, over kiddies."

"Queen o' beggars, by Gum!"

"Write me a nice cheque, Joe, and I won't bother you again for ever so long."

"For how long, Mrs. Stand-and-deliver?"

"Not till next month, Joe."

"And this is the twenty-ninth. It's a Paul Lamerie cup, old dear."

"Never heard of him."

"I dessay not." Quinney chuckled. "And the noble owner as was never heard of him neither."

"Noble owner?"

"French marquis!"

"A Frenchy? I hope he came by it lawfully, Joe."

"Friend o' the Duke o' Bellingham. And a perfect gentleman. I ain't to be flim-flammed by rogues, my girl. You can trust me."

"You *have* been had, Joe."

"When I was young and green, Susie. Now—you off it, and, perhaps, I'll give you a fiver."

Quinney locked up the cup and betook himself to Christie's. In the rooms he found, as he expected, an expert on plate, who displayed enthusiasm when he heard of the Paul Lamerie two-handled cup. Indeed, his interest was so challenged that he expressed a wish to see it.

"You can see it," said Quinney, "and we'll have a bite of the best ham in London afterwards."

"What did you fork out for it, Joe?"

"Ah! You can make a guess at that after you've looked at the beauty."

They walked back to Soho Square, discoursing at length upon treasure-trove and values.

As soon as the cup was taken from the safe, the expert congratulated Quinney solemnly, affirming that he had never beheld a finer specimen or one in better preservation.

'Where on earth did you find it?"

Quinney told the tale with gusto. The expert nodded.

"I can lay hands on a collector who'll give you a whacking profit."

Quinney betrayed uneasiness.

"I can't bear the thought of selling it," he muttered.

Upon the cup was exquisitely engraved a coat of arms, with supporters, surmounted by a coronet. The expert said, with authority:—

"That's an English coat, Joe, with a ducal coronet."

"And what of it?" asked Quinney.

"Nothing, but if you have a Peerage handy, we'll find out who owned the cup before it went to France."

"I have an old Peerage," said Quinney.

"The older the better; you fetch it."

Within five minutes the expert said, triumphantly:—

"We've the whole thing here. This cup was made for the second Duke of Bellingham, and the aunt of the present duke married a Marquis de Chantal. Probably the cup was a wedding gift. You're in big luck, Joe. I don't mind telling you now that I didn't quite like your yarn about a Frenchman drifting in here with that cup. It sounded a bit fishy. And then his being rung up by the Duke of Bellingham. I shied at that, too. But your duke and marquis are cousins. Probably the duke told the young man to go to you."

"More'n likely," assented Quinney. "I've told Susan again and again that a reputation for honesty is my biggest asset. Now—let's tackle the ham."

III.

AFTER luncheon two large cigars were smoked leisurely, and then Quinney found himself once more alone with his cup. At about three o'clock Lord Mel

appeared. Quinney was not surprised. His kind patron often dropped in for a friendly chat, and he, too, was a connoisseur of old silver.

"I have come to tell you more about the Marquis de Chantal."

"You are very kind, my lord."

"I am feeling slightly uneasy."

"Uneasy?"

"He is not in London."

Cold shivers meandered up and down Quinney's spine.

"Not in London!" he gasped.

"No; he is a sad cripple, a martyr to arthritis. He has not left his château in La Vendée for more than a year. A friend of mine at my club told me this after luncheon to-day, and fearing that something might be wrong I hastened here to you."

"How old is the Marquis de Chantal, my lord?"

"Over sixty, I should say."

"The young man who sold me the cup asked for a cheque. Ought I to stop that cheque?"

"Most assuredly—if you can."

But, alas! within a few minutes word came from the bank, over the 'phone, that a cheque signed by Joseph Quinney made payable to bearer had been cashed at five-and-twenty minutes to twelve that morning.

"You made it payable to bearer?" asked Lord Mel.

"He asked me to do so. And—and a few minutes before he had been talking over my 'phone with the Duke of Bellingham."

"Who is shooting in Westmorland, as I happen to know."

"I've been done," groaned Quinney, "crisp as a biscuit. The cup belonged to the second Duke of Bellingham. And an aunt of the present duke married the Marquis de Chantal. It's all in Burke, my lord."

"The cup, Quinney, must have been stolen. Probably by a clever rogue of a servant, who knew about the Bellingham connection and used his knowledge to good purpose. I can only suggest calling in the police at once."

"That means labelling myself as the biggest mug in the trade."

"It goes without saying that the cup will be missed and eventually claimed."

"I don't keep stolen goods, my lord. You know that."

"Everybody knows it, my dear fellow."

Lord Mel went away. Quinney sent for a particular friend of his, a private detective.

IV.

THE private detective looked like a prosperous suburban dentist. His eyes were mistily blue; he moved slowly; indeed, he was the last man to challenge attention in any company, which may have accounted for his success in an arduous profession.

He listened pensively to Quinney's story, asking no questions till the dealer had finished. Then he grasped the tale firmly.

"Let me see the receipt."

John Williams looked long and hard at the signature of Réné de Chantal.

"Not a first offence," he murmured.

"Hay?"

"He has signed his master's name before. I accept unreservedly Lord Mel's hypothesis. Only a trusted servant could have had access to such a valuable piece of plate. If the Marquis de Chantal is an invalid, probably he doesn't entertain. Such a cup might, presumably, be stolen and not missed for a long time. A servant could have possessed himself of the visiting-card. A servant would have known of the Bellingham connection. He spoke, you say, perfect English. It is quite likely that he is English."

Mr. Williams relapsed into silence, whilst Quinney groaned.

"Let me see the visiting-card, Mr. Quinney."

After careful inspection of the card, the oracle spoke again:—

"The card is genuine enough."

"Anybody can have a card printed."

"Pardon me! This is a highly glazed card, beautifully engraved. We are dealing with no common thief. He may have stolen other articles of value, and he came to London—the best market. Describe his appearance to me as accurately as you can."

Quinney did so. Mr. Williams rose.

"I will report in an hour's time."

"He said he was returning to Paris to-night."

"I have made a mental note of that."

Left alone, Quinney summoned the faithful Susan. In no uncertain terms he bewailed his unhappy lot.

"Down and out I am, Susie. Time I retired——! Five hundred of the best——!"

"But, Joe, you have the cup."

"Ho! That's a good 'un from a regular churchgoer."

"You paid the money for it and it's yours."

"No, it ain't, Mrs. Smarty. I've my reputation to think of. Lord Mel and others knows all about the cup. There'll be a rare hullabaloo when it's missed."

"Maybe Mr. Williams will catch him."

"Not an unborn puppy's chance o' that."

Susan said, obstinately:—

"I says the cup's yours, Joe."

"Go it! Keep on a-sayin' it! You have the morals of your waifs and strays, you have. But I'll tell you this, Mrs. Stolen

Goods: it isn't the loss o' the money that mads me. I can get that back by refusing to weigh in to your charities. No; it's bein' done, it's bein' had. And the Press'll get hold of it. That fair tears me, old lass."

"No; it's losing the cup tears you, Joe. You'd sooner lose me, yes, you would."

"What a tale——!"

"You'd have worshipped the golden calf if Paul What's-his-name had made it."

Quinney scowled at her.

"I sent for you, Susan Quinney, because I wanted sympathy. That seemin'ly is not on tap. Now, I'll have a glass o' brown sherry."

"Drink the poison out o' that precious cup, I would."

"Right you are, Mrs. Pussyfoot. I will."

And with Susan's disdainful eye upon him he did.

V.

IN less than the appointed hour Mr. Williams returned, but his face betrayed neither hope nor despair as he said, quietly:—

"The man who sold you that cup has not left London, Mr. Quinney."

"Ho! Maybe you can take me to him. And then——"

"And then——?"

The muscles of Joe Quinney were contracted as he replied, savagely:—

"I'd like to hit him one on the jaw. His 'jaw' did me in. But you're a fair marvel, you are. How did you find him, hay? And where?"

"I told you that he was no common thief." Quinney nodded. "For example, he hired a smart car. You seem to have hired a smart office-boy."

"That's me. I always get the best."

"Your office-boy noticed the car and its number."

"Did he? That boy'll have his salary raised."

"I found out where the car came from, because the chauffeur wore a livery adopted by a firm that lets out smart cars to smart people."

"By Gum! They ought to let out cars to you for nothing."

"It seems," continued Mr. Williams, impassively, "that this car was hired by your man and sent to the hotel where he is stopping. He is there now. And he is leaving for Paris—so I understand—to-night."

"Not if I know meself," exclaimed Quinney. He jumped up, afire with excitement. "Come on, old lad. It's in me to down him harder than he downed me."

"Just so. A taxi is waiting for us downstairs."

"Where is the hotel?" asked Quinney.

Mr. Williams named a quiet, old-fashioned hotel not far from St. James's Street. Upon the way thither, he added a few details. The young man had registered as Réné de Chantal. The people at the hotel had no suspicion that he was other than what he represented himself to be. He had arrived the day before from Paris. He had asked the manager of the hotel to provide a good car; he was occupying a sitting-room, with bed and bathroom attached.

"He has, of course, an accomplice," said Mr. Williams. "The person who 'phoned him."

"Two jail-birds at one shot," said Quinney. His hair bristled; his eyes sparkled.

"You enjoy a scrap?" asked Mr. Williams.

"You bet! Don't you?"

"No; I have had too many of 'em."

"An old campaigner, hay? Well, what's the plan? Frontal attack, what?"

"My inquiries have been discreet," affirmed Mr. Williams. "No suspicions have been aroused. If our man is at home, we will have a quiet word with the manager before we attempt——"

"Violence," exploded Quinney.

"There will be no necessity, I hope, for violence. You want your money back."

"I want more than that, my lad."

"What else?"

"If we cop him fair and square, and land him in jail, it will be the finest kind of 'ad.' for me."

"As your confidential adviser, Mr. Quinney, I may point out to you that your first objective should be the recovery of the money."

"We'll have that first."

"Or what is left of it."

"He ain't had time to blow-in much. I dessay he's looking forward to a beano in Paris."

"Possibly. His accomplice is a woman."

"What you say?"

"She is staying at the hotel as his wife."

Quinney assimilated this fresh information in stupefied silence. The taxi sped down a side street and stopped.

"Here we are," said Mr. Williams. "We will interview the manager first."

Quinney, mopping a fevered brow, followed his confidential adviser into a snug hall. A page ushered them into the presence of the manager. Very curtly and lucidly the facts in the case were stated by Mr. Williams.

After absorbing them, the manager said, deprecatingly:—

"The gentleman and his wife are upstairs now, having tea. This is a quiet hotel for quiet people. If—if matters could be arranged—quietly?"

"Compoundin' a felony?" sputtered Quinney.

The manager shrugged his shoulders, glancing interrogatively at the confidential adviser.

"We don't know," said Mr. Williams, lightly, "that this cup was stolen. This man may be acting for the real Marquis de Chantal."

"Then why does he steal his name?" asked Quinney. "Anyway, let me see him, alone. You can be handy, Williams, in the bathroom, hay? If this chap can satisfy me, there won't be any trouble, but," he set his square jaw, "I'll take a deal o' satisfying."

"I will show Mr. Quinney into the sitting-room," said the manager.

"Now you're talkin'."

Quinney stood up, clenching his fists. The manager opened the door, and began to ascend the thickly-carpeted stairs.

"Announce me as Mr. Joseph Quinney, please."

The sitting-room was on the first floor.

"Mr. Joseph Quinney."

QUINNEY found himself face to face with a sparkling brunette. The door of the sitting-room closed. The *pseudo*-marquis was not to be seen. Quinney stifled a groan, and silently cursed his confidential adviser. The sitting-room faced the street. Obviously, the bird, espying the taxi, had flown. The sparkling brunette, speaking with a French accent, said, graciously:—

"Ah! my hosband spoke to me of Mr. Quinnee. You will sit down, will you not, till he come?"

Quinney obeyed, thinking to himself: "I shall sit here for some time." However, he said, civilly:—

"Your husband has gone out, Madame?"

"Oh, no. He is ver' busy packing. You will drink a cup o' tea, no?"

Quinney confessed afterwards to his Susan that he was "rattled." Susan immediately leapt to the conclusion that the accomplice was good-looking, which, indeed, happened to be true. Quinney put it that she had "a way with her."

He declined the cup of tea, and asked to see Madame's husband.

"You are in a hurry, Mr. Quinnee?"

"Not particularly, Madame, but——"

"*Bon!* Monsieur de Chantal knows that tea is here. He will be delighted to see you. You make—how you say?—yes—an impression on my hosband, because you are so—so 'onest. I guess why you have come. You think we have other things, no?—that perhaps we might wish to sell you."

"Have you?" asked Quinney, bluntly. He was now alert and more at his ease. And he had noticed that the lady had spoken in a lower tone of voice.

"Alas! Yes. But you do not buy jewellery, *hein?*"

"I might," said Quinney, cautiously.

The lady's voice became a whisper.

"I have some emeralds, Mr. Quinnee, beautiful emeralds. My hosband would be angry eef I sold them, but, between us two, I want to sell my emeralds because we are so poor. And you are so 'onest that, perhaps, you will tell me of some man, also 'onest, who might buy my emeralds."

Quinney nodded, hardly able to speak. The "ad." that would demonstrate to a wondering world that he was the cleverest as well as the honestest dealer in London flared in headlines before his eyes. He had the cup. By the exercise of a little tact he might get possession of the emeralds.

"Can I see them, Madame?"

Madame smiled and lifted two pretty hands to her neck. From beneath what appeared to be a sable stole she unclasped a string of fine emeralds, which she handed confidingly to Quinney. He knew nothing about precious stones, but, if these were genuine, they must, he reckoned, be worth even more than the Paul Lamerie cup. He stared hard at them. As he did so, he heard what is called in stageland a "noise off."

"Put them in your pocket," commanded Madame, in a hurried whisper.

The astounded Quinney did so, as the husband of Madame entered the sitting-room from the bedroom. He advanced smilingly:—

'Mr. Quinney? This is a pleasant surprise. I am charmed to see you."

Quinney replied doggedly.

"It was a bit o' luck finding you in."

As he spoke he glanced uneasily at Madame. He wanted to settle his account in full with Monsieur, but Madame was pouring out the tea, and smiling coquettishly at him, as much as to say: "We have a leetle secret between us, Mr. Quinnee, no?"

"Sit down and have a cup of tea."

"Mr. Quinnee does not drink tea," said Madame; "but perhaps, Réné, you might tempt 'im with something stronger."

"Nothing for me," replied Quinney, stoutly. Nevertheless he sat down, wondering what would happen next. The feel of the emeralds in his pocket fortified his resolution to play up and play the game.

"You want to see me on business, Mr. Quinney?"

"Yes—business."

"All in good time," murmured Madame. It is dreadful, isn't it, that we should have to do business on our honeymoon?"

"Honeymoon?" repeated Quinney.

"Yes; we were married less than a week

ago. You did not—how you say ?—*spot* us as honeymooners, Mr. Quinnee ? "

" Frankly, Madame, I never suspected it."

" It is so nice of you to say that. But you are a nice man. That jumps to the eye."

Quinney moved uneasily in his chair. He failed to envisage this agreeable couple as jail-birds. And he had expected some indication of confusion. But Monsieur remained quite as cool as his charming wife.

Monsieur said, quietly :—

" There is no reason, Mr. Quinney, why you shouldn't talk business before my wife. And your time, of course, is valuable."

" I'm up against the cleverest thieves in France," thought Quinney. He was glad that he had refused tea. Madame might have slipped something into it other than sugar or milk.

" My time is my own," growled Quinney, " and has been for many a year."

" You do not regret buying the cup ? "

" No."

" Tell me—how did you discover this hotel ? Perhaps I had scribbled the address upon my card ? "

" I think you forgot to do that," said Quinney. He continued, gruffly: " I want a little more information about the cup. That coat of arms, now. I found it in Burke's peerage."

" Perfectly. Does it detract from the value of the cup ? "

" Not at all."

" Then I don't quite understand——"

" You will—presently."

At this, Madame, being a woman of tact, got up, and so did Quinney.

" I leave you to your business, but I return. I, too, wish to talk business with Mr. Quinnee."

Her husband opened the bedroom door for her. As she passed through it, she smiled at him innocently. In the long ago Susan had bestowed just such a smile upon her Joe, albeit he was red-headed and freckled. The smile left Quinney confounded. He was apt to rush to conclusions ; and he decided instantly that this pretty Frenchwoman was not a thief but the victim of a thief, who had beguiled her—the rascal !

" The game is up," said Quinney.

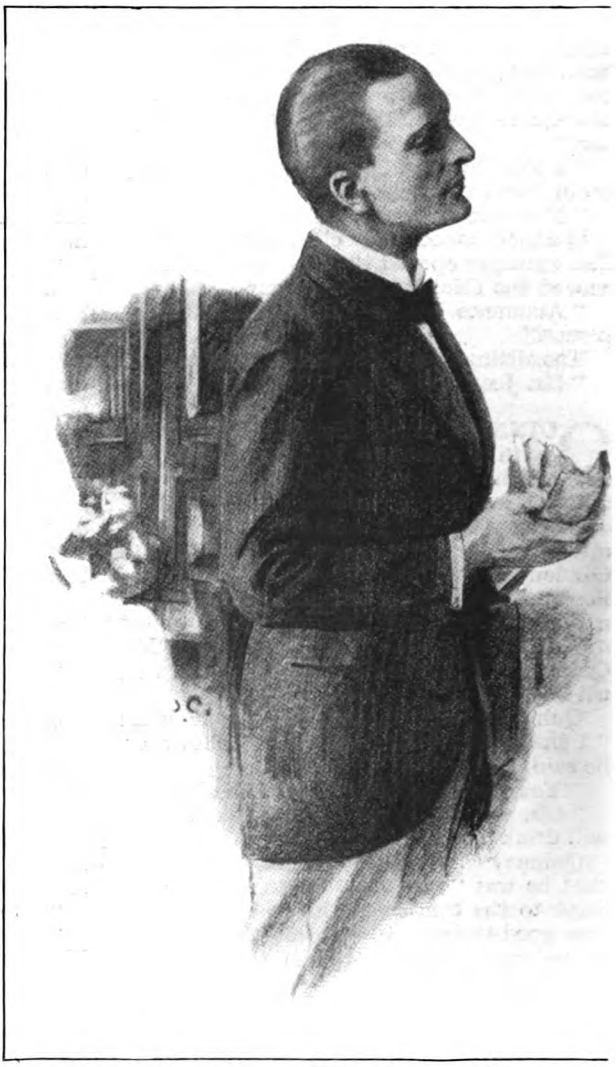
" Really ? What game ? "

" The game you are playing. I'll admit you're a player, but I'm not quite the damned fool you took me to be."

Monsieur lifted slightly supercilious brows.

Quinney went on :—

" It would pay such a clever fellow as you are to be honest. I don't know much about French law, but in your country, I'm told, they ' reconstruct ' a crime."



" Quinney moved uneasily in his chair. He failed of confusion. But

" You have not been misinformed. Pray go on ! "

" I can reconstruct this crime. You wanted to marry a pretty, innocent girl,

and Joe Quinney is the last man to blame you for that."

"Thanks. So far you are correct."

"Matrimony comes expensive since the war." Monsieur bowed. "And you hadn't saved much. It occurred to your thoughtful mind that a valuable cup not used for many years wouldn't be missed, hay?"

"You are reconstructing this crime admirably."

"When you took the cup, you took some emeralds."

"Emeralds? What can you know about the emeralds?"

"You don't deny that you took them?"

"I don't. What of it?"

to envisage this agreeable couple as jail-birds. And he had expected some indication Monsieur remained quite as cool as his charming wife."

"This is surprising, but perfectly true."

"You knew, also, that London was your market."

"I did."

"So, one night, when nobody was about, you slipped the cup into your suit-case."

"I take my hat off to you as the coolest card I've ever met. You ought to be serving your country."

"But I am, Mr. Quinney. And I hope to serve your country, too."

"You may," said Quinney, grimly.

"I confess," said Monsieur, not so patiently, "that I'm utterly at a loss to understand you. You seem to take the most extraordinary and well-informed interest in my private affairs, which assuredly do not concern you. Your time, obviously, is not valuable, but mine is. I wish you good day, Mr. Quinney."

"You're a cock o' the game," said Quinney, almost admiringly, "but if I leave this room before I've settled in full with you, the police will come in. Climb down, young feller, climb down."

But, to his immense surprise, the "young feller" burst into fits of uncontrollable laughter. When this had partially subsided, he crossed to the telephone, and spoke down it.

"Please ring up the French Embassy for me."

Then he turned, still laughing, to Quinney.

"I perceive, Mr. Quinney, that this is a case of mistaken identity. When the French Embassy ring us up, I want you to ask them if they know the Marquis de Chantal, and the name of the hotel where he is staying in, London. You may have to wait a few minutes."

"The Marquis de Chantal is an old man, crippled with arthritis, who has not left his house for a year."

"Ah! Light is coming to me. My father died three months ago. I have succeeded to a large and impoverished estate. I am also in the Diplomatic Service and hope to be attached to our Embassy here. If you are feeling as warm as you look, may I offer you a whisky-and-soda?"

"P-p-please," stammered Quinney.

VI.

THE French Embassy "got through" before the whisky-and-soda, and the shame-faced Quinney was constrained by a still laughing Frenchman to ask the necessary questions. Then he said, hurriedly:—

"I shall have to tell my wife about this, my lord, but don't tell yours."

"I agree."

"I'd like to make a bolt of it before she comes back."

The Marquis de Chantal held out his hand.

"If you insist——!"

Quinney moved to the door. And then he remembered the emeralds.

"Her ladyship wanted to speak to me on business."

"So she did. Wait!"

He opened the bedroom door and called to Madame, who appeared at once.

"I heard you laughing, Réné. What was the joke?"

"Mr. Quinney was reconstructing a crime for me, but the criminal escaped, and so do I."

Still laughing, he vanished. Quinney pulled out the emeralds and returned them to their owner.

"You mustn't sell these, Madame. You can take it from me that your husband will be an Ambassador some day, and then you'll need 'em. I wish you both the best of luck."

For the second time Quinney moved to the door and paused.

"Excuse the question, Madame, but did you lunch with the Duke of Bellingham at Claridge's to-day?"

"Yes, we did. But—why?"

"Nothing. I was told that his Grace was in Westmorland."

"Yes; but he came down to see us. My husband is his first cousin, you know."

"I know," said Quinney, retreating swiftly.

He was rather "short" in explaining matters to Mr. Williams and the manager, but he had recovered his equanimity when he met Susan. After gratifying to the full a wife's curiosity, he observed, cheerfully: "All's well that ends well. The cup is mine, Susie, *and it ain't for sale!*"

He was standing in the sanctuary, with the lights full on, staring at the cup as he spoke. Susan slipped to his desk, and pulled out a cheque-book.

"Now what are you up to?"

Susan opened the cheque-book, dipped a pen into the ink, and handed it coaxingly to her lord.

"Make it fifty, Joe, and then nobody'll ever know."

"Shut your eyes, old lass!"

She did so; Quinney filled in the cheque, and slipped it into her hand.

"Look!"

"Joe——!"

"Yes; man o' surprises I am. You didn't half know your luck when you married me."

The cheque for the Waifs and Strays was filled in for a hundred pounds.

LAWN TENNIS TACTICS

by

H. ROPER BARRETT

Tactics are Half the Game.

I HAVE been asked by the Editor of THE STRAND MAGAZINE to make a few observations for the benefit of his readers on the tactics of lawn tennis. In consenting to do so one nevertheless approaches this fascinating but rather difficult task in fear and trembling, for the simple reason that the projecting of a brain—however poor—on to paper is not easy to one unaccustomed to do so. This is simply another way of saying that lawn tennis after a certain standard has been reached is largely played by and in the brain, and not only on the surface of a court divided into various geometrical divisions. In this connection I recall and make no apology for repeating the advice given by John Dowling, the racquet maker, to my old friend Major J. C. Parke, the great Irish player who, we all regret, has given up the game. "Always remember," Dowling said, "that fifty per cent. of the game is played with the head, forty per cent. with the feet, and ten per cent. with the racquet."

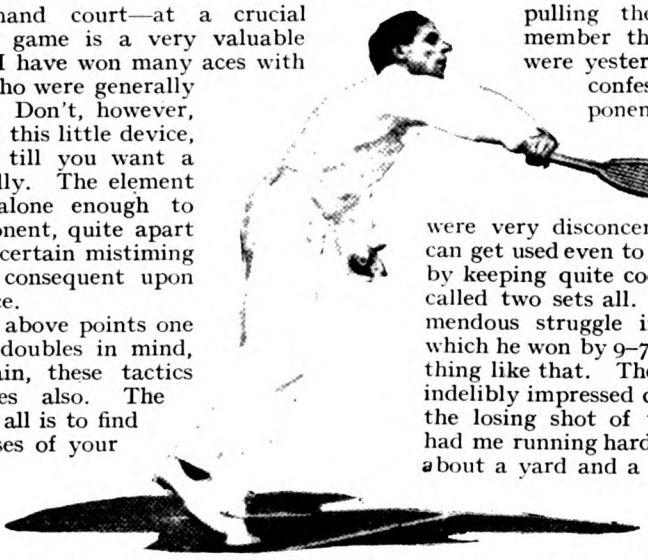
Given equal skill in stroke-production and consistency in returning the ball, the man who uses his head will usually win. The writer's present aim, therefore, is to express a few ideas as to how the brain can be brought to bear upon the game of lawn tennis through the medium of what is commonly known as tactics. The trouble, is of course, that much tactical work is unconscious, being in fact the subconscious result of a long experience of strenuous tussles with a great variety of opponents—good, bad, tricky, wily, and indifferent. Readers must, therefore, forgive me if my remarks are somewhat rambling and rather personal in character. Tactics is not after all an exact science which can be reduced to mathematical terms, although a knowledge of angles is a considerable asset to the lawn-tennis player.

Tactics of the Service.

Having thus unburdened my mind with these few introductory and preliminary platitudes, I may as well point out right away that tactics start with the service, and can in fact be divided into (*a*) tactics as regards the service and (*b*) tactics when the ball is once in play. It has been my experience that in the long run the very fast or lightning service does not always pay the server. A very fast delivery with kick and screw either way is difficult to achieve with consistent accuracy. The strain on the muscles of the arm and back apparently has a most telling and prejudicial effect upon the staying powers of the server, and the player with a service of this description who "lives" ten years or more is an exception, *vide* Norman Brookes. Moderate servers, on the other hand, would seem to live long, playing for twenty years and upwards, and providing really good lawn tennis at that. Year in and year out, if you aim to be anything more than a rocket at the game, the medium to slow-paced service—as affected by S. N. Doust—well placed with a very low trajectory, is the most paying, to my way of thinking. There is little bodily exertion, for one thing, which means much energy conserved, while if you judge the pace correctly one should be within two or three feet of the net when the return is made. (I am referring now more particularly to doubles than singles.) It is very difficult indeed to win a point outright from a slow service if the server be sitting on the net within a second or so of the striker-out hitting the ball. The bringing into play, however, of a fast service—if possible down the centre-line, especially if you are serving

from the left-hand court—at a crucial moment in any game is a very valuable tactical move. I have won many aces with it against men who were generally upon their toes. Don't, however, make a hobby of this little device, but save it up till you want a point ever so badly. The element of surprise is alone enough to defeat your opponent, quite apart from the almost certain mistiming of the delivery consequent upon its increased pace.

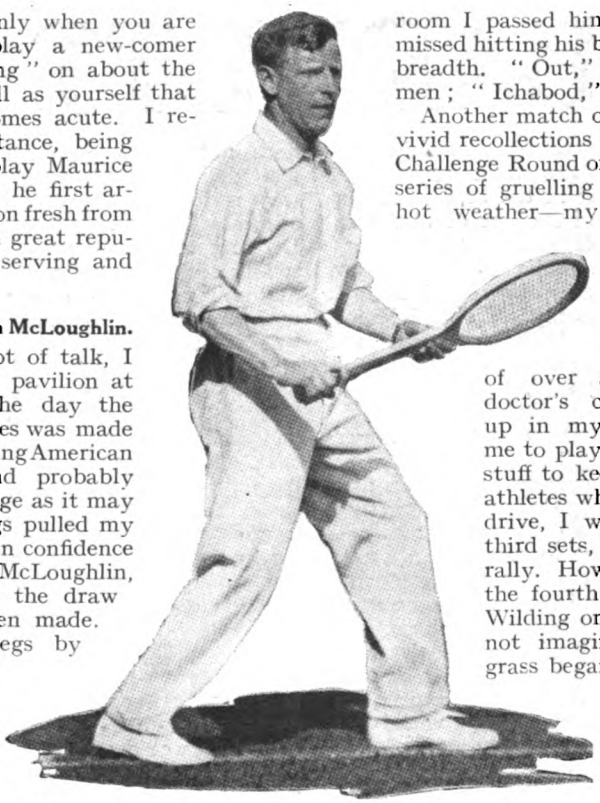
In making the above points one has rather had doubles in mind, but, in the main, these tactics apply to singles also. The main thing after all is to find out the weaknesses of your opponent. Those of us who occasionally play in tournaments know the failings and foibles of most of the regular competitors. It is only when you are called upon to play a new-comer to "the silver ring" on about the same level of skill as yourself that the problem becomes acute. I remember, for instance, being called upon to play Maurice McLoughlin when he first arrived at Wimbledon fresh from the States, with a great reputation for fiery serving and deadly killing.



The late H. L. DOHERTY, the finest all-round player, according to the author, which the game has produced.

A Great Game with McLoughlin.

There was a lot of talk, I remember, in the pavilion at Wimbledon on the day the draw for the singles was made as to what this young American could, might, and probably would do. Strange as it may seem, several wags pulled my leg by telling me in confidence that I had drawn McLoughlin, although I knew the draw had not then been made. I pulled their legs by appearing excited, but the joke of it was that when I had actually drawn the young Californian and told my jocular friends, they thought I was pulling their leg. I remember the game as if it were yesterday, and I must confess that my opponent's high bounding service and deadly volleying at the net were very disconcerting. But one can get used even to a hurricane, and by keeping quite cool the score was called two sets all. We had a tremendous struggle in the fifth set, which he won by 9–7 or 7–5, or something like that. The one thing most indelibly impressed on my mind was the losing shot of the match. He had me running hard to my forehand about a yard and a half outside the base-line, the ball going away from me. Nevertheless, I got to it, and with only about three inches of room I passed him, but the ball just missed hitting his base-line by a hair's-breadth. "Out," shouted the linesmen; "Ichabod," said I.



S. N. DOUST, whose slow-paced service enables the Anglo-Australian to get into an excellent volleying position at the net.

Another match of which I have very vivid recollections was the Wimbledon Challenge Round of 1911, when, after a series of gruelling matches in baking-hot weather—my recovery against C. P. Dixon in the All Comers' final nearly killed me—I faced the late "Tony" Wilding with a temperature of over a hundred and a doctor's certificate crumpled up in my pocket forbidding me to play. Playing soft high stuff to keep one of the fittest athletes who ever lived off his drive, I won the second and third sets, feeling worse every rally. How I struggled through the fourth set, which brought Wilding on an equality, I cannot imagine, but when the grass began to roll like waves and the stands started to close in upon me I had to give it up. What really settled me was the tremendous rally we had in the fourth set to decide whether I should

make it two-all or Wilding gain a lead of 3—1. Wilding won, and that finished me. The funny thing about it all was that I never intended to enter seriously for the Singles that year; indeed, only when the draw was made did I discover that a friend had sent in my name.

The Use of Lobs.

My usual plan when opposed to a player whose methods and strokes are unknown to me, and one that can be recommended, is to put up a few lobs—slow balls of high trajectory—to try to ascertain which are the strong and which the weak points in your opponent's game. You will note carefully, for instance, whether he runs round a good shot to his backhand, volleys it, or plays it cleanly and forcibly off the ground with his backhand. Give your friend the enemy a variety of these test shots, noting for future reference what he does with a volley, how he shapes at a well-tossed lob, if he relishes a short one, etc. Then play most of the time to the point you have ascertained to be his weakest. Some players, of course, can be the more easily beaten by giving them the shots for which they are asking to enable them to bring off their favourite stroke, as this they are always liable to overdo.

NORMAN E. BROOKES, who has kept his fiery service longer than any of his contemporaries.

The late "TONY" WILDING, who beat H. Roper Barrett (retired) in the sensational Challenge round of 1911.

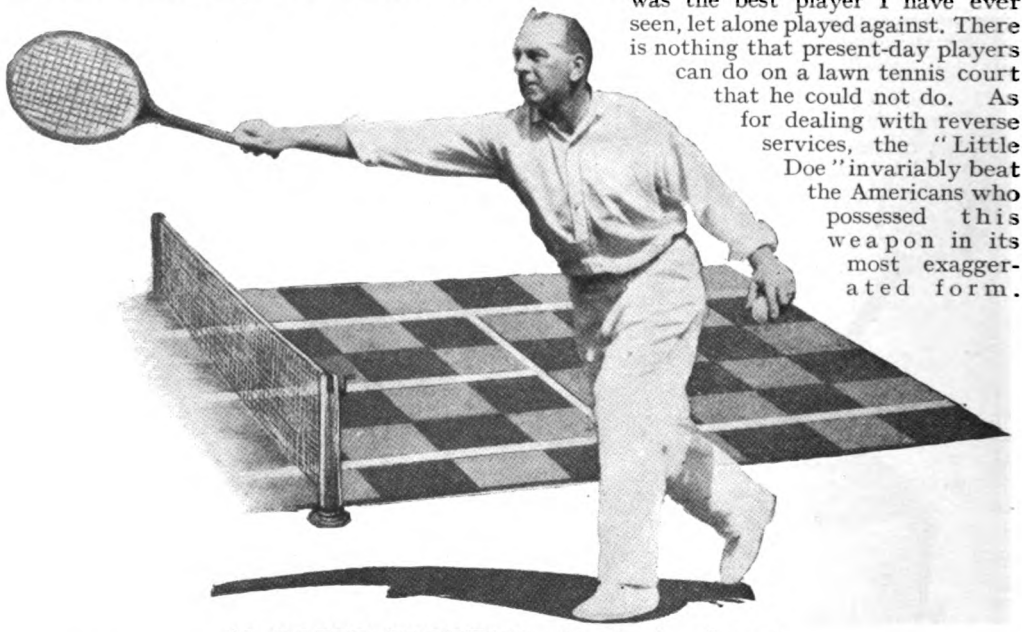
Another point. You often hear players say: "He led me five—one in the last set and yet I got home." There is no occasion for the "and yet." Each game at lawn tennis is a

separate affair and should be treated as such. It is, of course, rather nasty to have a big lead hanging over you, but this should never be allowed to worry one unduly. As I have remarked previously, it sometimes pays to place the ball to your opponent's favourite position for making his winners from, but take thundering good care to score off his pet returns.

This will make him wonder and lose confidence. Again let me urge the great necessity for finding out exactly what your man can do and what he cannot. Give him as much as possible of the stuff he obviously hates, but do not forget to vary your play the whole game through according to the soft ball with the aforesaid high trajectory and good length to his backhand. This is one of the most disconcerting shots in the game to all types of players, and, moreover, often gives one a chance to get back into court when temporarily driven out.

The Best Player I Have Met.

Your great trial will be meeting a player of the calibre of the late H. L. Doherty, who had no weaknesses at which to peg away. He was, in my judgment, as near perfection as possible. All the modern players whom I have seen display a weakness somewhere. After much deliberation I have come to the definite conclusion that the younger Doherty was the best player I have ever seen, let alone played against. There is nothing that present-day players can do on a lawn tennis court that he could not do. As for dealing with reverse services, the "Little Doe" invariably beat the Americans who possessed this weapon in its most exaggerated form.



H. ROPER BARRETT, with chessboard court.

(Our artist's whimsical imagination of how an ordinary lawn tennis court must appear to Mr. Roper Barrett.)

opposition, in order that the other fellow may not settle down.

I wonder if S. H. Smith remembers that game we played on the centre court at Wimbledon some twenty years ago. We had a gruelling match which lasted for over three hours (5 p.m. to 8.10 p.m.), Smith beating me 11–9 in the fifth set. He ran round all his backhand shots and I ran miles and miles after his returns—first in the angle of the service-line and then in the farthest corner of the base-lines. Next year we met again, when I played softly with high—very high—trajectory to his *forehand* and beat him three sets to love. *Verb. sap.*

Generally speaking, it is a great mistake to give hard returns to a man who thrives on pace. For this type of gentleman play a "H. L." was sound all round, and with his brother made the perfect double.

Too much is made, I think, of the modern fiery service; it rarely lasts for long. Where is Maurice McLoughlin's service to-day? I wonder, too, in this connection how the team of Americans A. W. Gore, E. D. Black, and myself met in the first Davis Cup at Longwood in 1900 would fare against the three of us to-day? I am almost persuaded to wager a large sum of money—only the L.T.A. won't let me—that Malcolm Whitman, Dwight Davis, and Holcombe Ward would not beat us if they came to Wimbledon this year.

After all, the great attraction of the game of lawn tennis is that you can play it for years and years for your own personal enjoyment and the preservation of your health.

Some Adventures of THE FOUR JUST MEN by Edgar Wallace

ILLUSTRATED BY E. VERPILLEUX.

III.

THE MAN WHO HATED EARTHWORMS.

"THE death has occurred at Staines of Mr. Falmouth, late Superintendent of the Criminal Investigation Department. Mr. Falmouth will best be remembered as the officer who arrested George Manfred, the leader of The Four Just Men gang. The sensational escape of this notorious man is perhaps the most remarkable chapter in criminal history. 'The Four Just Men' was an organization which set itself to right acts of injustice which the law left unpunished. It is believed that the members were exceedingly rich men who devoted their lives and fortunes to this quixotic but wholly unlawful purpose. The gang has not been heard of for many years."

Manfred read the paragraph from the *Morning Telegram*, and Leon Gonsalez frowned.

"I have an absurd objection to being called a 'gang,'" he said, and Manfred smiled quietly.

"Poor old Falmouth," he reflected, "well he knows! He was a nice fellow."

"I liked Falmouth," agreed Gonsalez. "He was a perfectly normal man except for a slight progenism——"

Manfred laughed.

"Forgive me if I appear dense, but I have never been able to keep up with you in this particular branch of science," he said; "what is a 'progenism'?"

"The unscientific call it an 'underhung jaw,'" explained Leon, "and it is mistaken for strength. It is only normal in Piedmont, where the Brachycephalic skull is so common. With such a skull, progenism is almost a natural condition."

"Progenism or not, he was a good fellow," insisted Manfred, and Leon nodded. "With well-developed wisdom teeth," he added, slyly, and Gonsalez went red, for teeth formed a delicate subject with him. Nevertheless, he grinned.

They were sitting on a little green lawn overlooking Babbacombe beach. The sun was going down, and a perfect day was drawing to its golden close.

Manfred looked at his watch.

"Are we dressing for dinner?" he asked, "or has your professorial friend Bohemian tastes?"

"He is of the new school," said Leon; "rather superior, rather immaculate, very Balliol. I am anxious that you should meet him, his hands are rather fascinating."

Manfred in his wisdom did not ask why.

"I met him at golf," Gonsalez went on, "and certain things happened which interested me. For example, every time he saw an earthworm he stopped to kill it, and displayed such an extraordinary fury in the assassination that I was astounded. Prejudice has no place in the scientific mind. He is exceptionally wealthy. People at the club told me that his uncle left him close on a million, and the estate of his aunt or cousin who died last year was valued at another million, and he was the sole legatee. Naturally a good catch. Whether Miss Moleneux thinks the same I have had no opportunity of gauging," he added, after a pause.

"Good lord!" cried Manfred, in consternation, as he jumped up from his chair. "She is coming to dinner, too, isn't she?"

"And her mamma," said Leon, soberly.

" Her mamma has learnt Spanish by Correspondence Lessons, and insists upon greeting me with ' *habla usted Espanol ?* ' "

The two men had rented Cliff House for the spring. " Señor Fuentes " had taken it after one inspection, and found the calm and the peace which only Nature's treasury of colour and fragrance could bring to his active mind.

MANFRED had dressed, and was sitting by the wood fire in the drawing-room when the purr of a motor-car coming cautiously down the cliff road brought him to his feet and through the open French window.

Leon Gonsalez had joined him before the big limousine had come to a halt in front of the porch.

The first to alight was a man, and George observed him closely. He was tall and thin. He was not bad-looking, though the face was lined and the eyes deep-set and level. He greeted Gonsalez with just a tiny hint of patronage in his tone.

" I hope we haven't kept you waiting, but my experiments detained me. Nothing went right in the laboratory to-day. You know Miss Moleneux and Mrs. Moleneux ? "

Manfred was introduced, and found himself shaking hands with a grave-eyed girl of singular beauty.

Manfred was unusually sensitive to " atmosphere," and there was something about this girl which momentarily chilled him. Her frequent smile, sweet as it was and undoubtedly sincere, was as undoubtedly mechanical. Leon, who judged people by reason rather than instinct, reached his conclusion more surely, and gave shape and definite description to what in Manfred's mind was merely a distressful impression. The girl was afraid ! Of what, wondered Leon. Not of that stout, complacent little woman whom she called mother, and surely not of this thin-faced, academic gentleman in *pince-nez ?*

Gonsalez had introduced Dr. Viglow, and whilst the ladies were taking off their cloaks in Manfred's room above he had leisure to form a judgment. There was no need for him to entertain his guest. Dr. Viglow spoke fluently, entertainingly, and all the time.

" Our friend here plays a good game of golf," he said, indicating Gonsalez ; " a very good game of golf indeed for a foreigner. You, too, are Spanish ? "

Manfred nodded. He was more thoroughly English than the doctor, did that gentleman but know ; but it was as a Spaniard, and armed, moreover, with a Spanish passport, that he was a visitor to Britain.

" I understood you to say that your investigations have taken rather a sensational turn, doctor," said Leon, and a light came into Dr. Viglow's eyes.

" Yes," he said, complacently, and then quickly : " Who told you that ? "

" You told me yourself at the club this morning."

The doctor frowned.

" Did I ? " he said, and passed his hand across his forehead. " I can't recollect that. When was this ? "

" This morning," said Leon ; " but your mind was probably occupied with much more important matters."

The young professor bit his lip and frowned thoughtfully.

" I ought not to have forgotten what happened this morning," he said, in a troubled tone.

He gave the impression to Manfred that one half of him was struggling desperately to overcome a something in the other half. Suddenly he laughed.

" A sensational turn ! " he said. " Yes, indeed, and I rather think that within a few months I shall not be without fame, even in my own country ! It is, of course, terribly expensive. I was only reckoning up to-day that my typists' wages come to nearly sixty pounds a week."

Manfred opened his eyes at this.

" Your typists' wages ? " he repeated, slowly. " Are you preparing a book ? "

" Here are the ladies," said Dr. Viglow.

His manner was abrupt to rudeness, and later when they sat round the table in the little dining-room Manfred had further cause to wonder at the boorishness of this young scientist. He was seated next to Miss Moleneux, and the meal was approaching its end, when most unexpectedly he turned to the girl and in a loud voice said :—

" You haven't kissed me to-day, Margaret."

The girl went red and white and the fingers that fidgeted with the table-ware before her were trembling when she faltered:—

" Haven't—haven't I, Felix ? "

The bright eyes of Gonsalez never left the doctor. The man's face had gone purple with rage.

" By God ! This is a nice thing ! " he almost shouted. " I'm engaged to you. I've left you everything in my will, and I'm allowing your mother a thousand a year, and you haven't kissed me to-day ! "

" Doctor ! " It was the mild but insistent voice of Gonsalez that broke the tension. " I wonder whether you would tell me what chemical is represented by the formula Cl_2O_5."

The doctor had turned his head slowly at the sound of Leon's voice, and now was staring at him. Slowly the strange look passed from his face and it became normal.

" Cl_2O_5 is oxide of chlorine," he said, in an even voice, and from thenceforward the conversation passed, by way of acid reactions, into a scientific channel.

The only person at the table who had not been perturbed by Viglow's outburst had been the dumpy, complacent lady on Manfred's right. She had tittered audibly at the reference to her allowance, and when the hum of conversation became general she lowered her voice and leant toward Manfred.

" Dear Felix is so eccentric," she said, " but he is quite the nicest, kindest soul. One must look after one's girls, don't you agree, Señor ? "

She asked this latter question in very bad Spanish, and Manfred nodded. He shot a glance at the girl. She was still deathly pale.

" And I am perfectly certain she will be happy—much happier than she would have been with that impossible person."

She did not specify who the " impossible person " was, but Manfred sensed a whole world of tragedy. He was not romantic, but one look at the girl had convinced him that there was something wrong in this engagement. Now it was that he came to a conclusion which Leon had reached an hour before : that the emotion which dominated the girl was fear. And he pretty well knew of whom she was afraid.

Half an hour later, when the tail-light of Dr. Viglow's limousine had disappeared round a corner of the drive, the two men went back to the drawing-room, and Manfred threw a handful of kindling to bring the fire to a blaze.

" Well, what do you think ? " said Gonsalez, rubbing his hands together with evidence of some enjoyment.

" I think it's rather horrible," replied Manfred, settling himself in his chair. " I thought the days when wicked mothers

" Unexpectedly he turned to the girl and in a loud voice said : ' You haven't kissed me to-day, Margaret.' "

forced their daughters into unwholesome marriages were past and done with. One hears so much about the modern girl."

"Human nature isn't modern," said Gonsalez, briskly, "and most mothers are fools where their daughters are concerned. I know you won't agree, but I speak with authority. Mantegazza collected statistics of eight hundred and forty-three families——"

Manfred chuckled.

"You and your Mantegazza!" he laughed. "Did that infernal man know everything?"

"Almost everything," said Leon. "As to the girl"—he became suddenly grave—"she will not marry him, of course."

"What is the matter with him?" asked Manfred. "He seems to have an ungovernable temper."

"He is mad," replied Leon, calmly, and Manfred looked at him.

"Mad?" he repeated, incredulously. "Do you mean to say that he is a lunatic?"

"I never use the word mad in a spectacular or even in a vulgar sense," said Gonsalez, lighting a cigarette carefully. "The man is undoubtedly mad. I thought so a few days ago, and I am certain of it now. The most ominous test is the test of memory. People who are on the verge of madness, or entering its early stages, do not remember what happened a short time before. Did you notice how worried he was when I told him of the conversation we had had this morning?"

"That struck me as peculiar," agreed Manfred.

"He was fighting," said Leon; "the sane half of his brain against the insane half. The doctor against the irresponsible animal. The doctor told him that if he had suddenly lost his memory for incidents which had occurred only a few hours before, he was on the high way to lunacy. The crazy half of the brain told him that he was such a wonderful fellow that the rules applying to ordinary human beings did not apply to him. We will call upon him to-morrow to see his laboratory, and discover why he is paying sixty pounds a week for typists," he said. "And now, my dear George, you can go to bed. I am going to read the excellent but often misguided Lombroso on the male delinquent."

DR. VIGLOW'S laboratory was a new red building on the edge of Dartmoor. To be exact, it consisted of two buildings, one of which was a large army hut which had been recently erected for the accommodation of the doctor's clerical staff.

"I haven't met a professor for two or three years," said Manfred, as they were driving across the moor, *en route* to pay their call, "nor have I been in a laboratory for five. And yet, within the space of a few weeks, I have met two extraordinary professors, one of whom I admit was dead. Also I have visited two laboratories."

Leon nodded.

"Some day I will make a very complete examination of the phenomena of coincidence," he said.

When they reached the laboratory they found a post-office van backed up against the main entrance, and three assistants in white overalls were carrying post-bags and depositing them in the van.

"He must have a pretty large correspondence," said Manfred, in wonder.

The doctor, in a long white overall, was standing at the door as they alighted from their car, and greeted them warmly.

"Come into my office," he said, and led the way to a large airy room which was singularly free from the paraphernalia which Gonsalez usually associated with such workrooms.

"You have a heavy post," said Leon, and the doctor laughed quietly.

"They are merely going to the Torquay post-office," he said. "I have arranged for them to be dispatched when——" he hesitated—"when I am sure. You see," he said, speaking with great earnestness, "a scientist has to be so careful. Every minute after he has announced a discovery he is tortured with the fear that he has forgotten something, some essential, or has reached a too hasty conclusion. But I think I'm right," he said, speaking half to himself. "I'm sure I'm right, but I must be even more sure!"

He showed them round the large room, but there was little which Manfred had not seen in the laboratory of the late Professor Tableman. Viglow had greeted them genially, indeed expansively, and yet within five minutes of their arrival he was taciturn, almost silent, and did not volunteer information about any of the instruments in which Leon showed so much interest unless he was asked.

They came back to his room, and again his mood changed, and he became almost gay.

"I'll tell you," he said; "by Jove, I'll tell you! And no living soul knows this except myself, or realizes or understands the extraordinary work I have been doing."

His face lit up, his eyes sparkled, and it seemed to Manfred that he grew taller in this moment of exaltation. Pulling open a drawer of a table which stood against the wall, he brought out a large porcelain dish and laid it down. From a wire-netted cupboard on the wall he took two tin boxes and, with an expression of disgust which he could not disguise, turned the contents into

"He turned the contents into the dish, and then Leon saw to his amazement a wriggling little red shape twisting and turning in its acute discomfort."

the dish. It was apparently a box full of common garden mould, and then Leon saw to his amazement a wriggling little red shape twisting and twining in its acute discomfort. The little red fellow sought to hide himself, and burrowed sinuously into the mould.

"Curse you! Curse you!" The doctor's voice rose until it was a howl. His face was twisted and puckered in his mad rage. "How I hate you!"

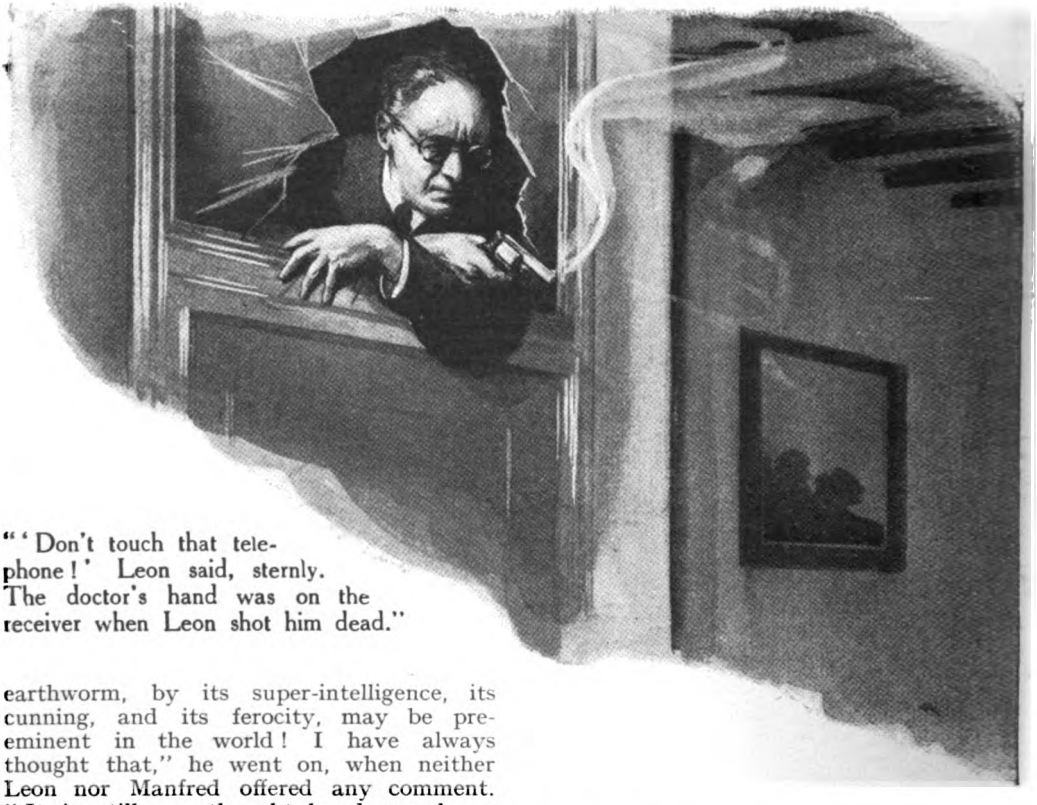
If ever a man's eyes held hate and terror, they were the eyes of Dr. Felix Viglow.

Manfred drew a long breath, and stepped back a pace the better to observe him. Then the man calmed himself, and peered down at Leon.

"When I was a child," he said, in a voice that shook, "I hated them, and we had a nurse named Martha, a beastly woman, a wicked woman, who dropped one down my neck. Imagine the horror of it!"

Leon said nothing. To him the earthworm was a genus of chætopod in the section *oligochæta* and bore the somewhat pretentious name of *Lumbricus terretris*. And in that way Dr. Viglow, eminent naturalist and scientist, should have regarded this beneficent little fellow.

"I have a theory," said the doctor—he was calmer now and was wiping the sweat from his forehead with a handkerchief—"that in cycles every type of living thing on the earth becomes in turn the dominant creature. In a million years' time man may dwindle to the size of an ant, and the



"'Don't touch that telephone!' Leon said, sternly. The doctor's hand was on the receiver when Leon shot him dead."

earthworm, by its super-intelligence, its cunning, and its ferocity, may be pre-eminent in the world! I have always thought that," he went on, when neither Leon nor Manfred offered any comment. "It is still my thought by day and my dream by night. I have devoted my life to the destruction of this menace."

Now, the earthworm is neither cunning nor intelligent, and is, moreover, notoriously devoid of ambition.

The doctor again went to the cupboard, and took out a wide-necked bottle filled with a greyish powder. He brought it back and held it within a few inches of Leon's face.

"This is the work of twelve years," he said, simply. "There is no difficulty in finding a substance which will kill these pests, but this does more."

He took a scalpel and, tilting the bottle, brought out a few grains of the powder on the edge of the blade. This he dissolved in a twenty-ounce measure which he filled with water. He stirred the colourless fluid with a glass rod, then lifting the rod he allowed three drops to fall upon the mould wherein the little reptile was concealed. A few seconds passed; there was a heaving of the earth where the victim was concealed.

"He is dead," said the doctor, triumphantly, and scraped away the earth to prove the truth of his words. "And he is not only dead, but that handful of earth is death to any other earthworm that touches it."

He rang a bell and one of his attendants came in.

"Clear away that," he said, with a shudder, and walked gloomily to his desk.

Leon did not speak all the way back to the house. He sat curled up in the corner of the car, his arms tightly folded, his chin on his breast. That night without a word of explanation he left the house, declining Manfred's suggestion that he should walk with him, and volunteering no information as to where he was going.

Gonsalez walked by the cliff road, across Babbacombe Downs, and came to the doctor's house at nine o'clock that night. The doctor had a large house and maintained a big staff of servants, but amongst his other eccentricities was the choice of a gardener's cottage away from the house as his sleeping-place at night.

It was only lately that the doctor had chosen this lonely lodging. He had been happy enough in the big old house which had been his father's, until he had heard voices whispering to him at night and the creak of boards, and had seen shapes vanishing along the dark corridors, and then in his madness he had conceived the idea that his servants were conspiring against him

and that he might any night be murdered in his bed. So he had the gardener turned out of his cottage, had refurnished the little house, and there, behind locked doors, he read and thought and slept the nights away. Gonsalez had heard of this peculiarity, and approached the cottage with some caution, for a frightened man is more dangerous than a wicked man. He rapped at the door, and heard a step across the flagged floor.

"Who is that?" asked a voice.

"It is I," said Gonsalez, and gave the name by which he was known.

After hesitation the lock turned and the door opened.

"Come in, come in," said Viglow, testily, and locked the door behind him. "You have come to congratulate me, I am sure. You must come to my wedding too, my friend. It will be a wonderful wedding, for there I shall make a speech and tell the story of my discovery. Will you have a drink? I have nothing here, but I can get it from the house. I have a telephone in my bedroom."

Leon shook his head.

"I have been rather puzzling out your plan, doctor," he said, accepting the proffered cigarette, "and I have been trying to connect those postal bags which I saw being loaded at the door of your laboratory with the discovery which you revealed this afternoon."

Dr. Viglow's narrow eyes were gleaming with merriment, and he leant back in his chair and crossed his legs, like one preparing for a pleasant recital.

"I will tell you," he said. "For months I have been in correspondence with farming associations, both here and on the Continent.

I have something of a European reputation," he said, with that extraordinary immodesty which Leon had noticed before. "In fact, I think that my treatment for phylloxera did more to remove the scourge from the vineyards of Europe than any other preparation."

Leon nodded. He knew this to be the truth.

"So, you see, my word is accepted in matters dealing with agriculture. But I found after one or two talks with our own stupid farmers that there is a common prejudice against destroying"—he did not mention the dreaded name but shivered—"and that, of course, I had to get round. Now that I am satisfied that my preparation is exact, I can release the packets in the post-office. In fact, I was just about to telephone to the postmaster telling him that they could go off—they are all stamped and addressed—when you knocked at the door."

"To whom are they addressed?" asked Leon, steadily.

"To various farmers — some fourteen thousand in all—in various parts of the country and Europe, and each packet has printed instructions in English, French, German, and Spanish. I had to tell them that it was a new kind of fertilizer, or they may not have been as enthusiastic in the furtherance of my experiment as I am."

"And what are they going to do with these packets when they get them?"

"They will dissolve them and spray a certain area of their land—I suggested ploughed land. They need only treat a limited area of earth," he explained. "I think these wretched beasts will carry infection quickly enough. I believe," he leant forward and spoke impressively, "that in six months there will not be one living in Europe or Asia."

"They do not know that the poison is intended to kill—earthworms?" asked Leon.

"No, I've told you," snapped the other. "Wait, I will telephone the postmaster."

He rose quickly to his feet, but Leon was quicker and gripped his arm.

"My dear friend," he said, "you must not do this."

Dr. Viglow tried to withdraw his arm.

"Let me go," he snarled. "Are you one of those devils who are trying to torment me?"

In ordinary circumstances, Leon would have been strong enough to hold the man, but Viglow's strength was extraordinary, and Gonsalez found himself thrust back into the chair. Before he could spring up the man had passed through the door and slammed and locked it behind him.

The cottage was on one floor, and was divided into two rooms by a wooden partition which Viglow had had erected. Over the door was a fanlight, and, pulling the table forward, Leon sprang on to the top and with his elbow smashed the flimsy frame.

"Don't touch that telephone!" he said, sternly. "Do you hear?"

The doctor looked round with a grin.

"You are a friend of those devils," he said, and his hand was on the receiver when Leon shot him dead.

MANFRED came back the next morning from his walk and found Gonsalez pacing the lawn, smoking an extra long cigar.

"My dear Leon," said Manfred, as he slipped his arm in the other's, "you did not tell me."

"I thought it best to wait," said Leon.

"I heard quite by accident," Manfred went on. "The story is that a burglar broke into the cottage and shot the doctor when he was telephoning for assistance. All the silverware in the outer room has been stolen. The doctor's watch and pocket-book have disappeared."

"They are at this moment at the bottom of Babbacombe Bay," said Leon. "I went fishing very early this morning before you were awake."

They paced the lawn in silence for a while, and then:—

"Was it necessary?" asked Manfred.

"Very necessary," said Leon, gravely. "You have to realize first of all that although this man was mad, he had discovered not only a poison, but an infection."

"But, my dear fellow," smiled Manfred, "was an earthworm worth it?"

"Worth more than his death," said Leon. "There isn't a scientist in the world who does not agree that if the earthworm was destroyed the world would become sterile and the people of this world would be starving in seven years."

Manfred stopped in his walk and stared down at his companion.

"Do you really mean that?"

"He is the one necessary creature in God's world," Leon said, soberly. "It fertilizes the land and covers the bare rocks with earth. It is the surest friend of mankind that we know, and now I am going down to the post-office with a story which I think will be sufficiently plausible to recover those worm-poisoners."

Manfred mused a while, then he said:—

"I'm glad in many ways—in every way," he corrected. "I rather liked that girl, and I'm sure that impossible person isn't so impossible."

Next month: "The Man Who Died Twice."

THE EGREGIOUS GOAT

by MORLEY ROBERTS

Illustrated by J. A. SHEPHERD & G. L. STAMPA

IT was in her aunt's box at the Opera that Gwendolen Oakhurst first met Lord Bampton. They were playing something revolutionary by Stravinsky, but to Gwen the music was but the prelude to her own romance.

"He's certainly handsome," said Gwen pensively, as she looked across the theatre.

"And wishes to meet you, my dear," said old Lady Mary Warrington. "With a reserved nature like Harry's that speaks whole encyclopædias."

"Tell me about him," said Gwen. "I really think I shall like him, Auntie."

"Like him? You will love him, my dear," said Lady Mary. "He has looks, brains, immense wealth, and is of the kindliest disposition. With such advantages one expects to find a failure somewhere, perhaps in manners. His are perfect. He possesses the magnificent calm which was held in my youth to distinguish the well-bred."

"Has he no faults whatever?" asked her niece.

"If he has one it is a virtue," replied Lady Mary, "and one which should be an additional attraction to you. He adores animals. He even breeds wild horses in his park, and he asks to be introduced to you! Do you want an archangel?"

"Not exactly," said Gwen, pensively.

"I have none on my visiting list," said Lady Mary.

On one whose heart was also warm, who adored animals and was herself a notably sweet example of the type best represented by Gainsborough in his most successful portraits, such representations could not fail to have an instant effect, even if Lady Mary's collocation of wild-horse breeding and a desire for an introduction was somewhat startling. When representation was replaced by adoring reality the result was all that Lady Mary hoped for. It came about with such amazing rapidity that in less than a week there would have been news concerning his daughter to be imparted to Colonel Oakhurst, had not Gwen begged her lover to give her time to break it.

"As long as our marriage is not delayed," said Lord Bampton, amiably, "I do not mind postponing the news of our engagement. I will then call early next week and ask for permission to pay you my addresses, dearest."

"They will be well received," said Gwen, smiling.

"And if your dear, ferocious, white-haired father is not amenable, I shall of course run away with you," said her lover, as he kissed her hand.

"With your wild horses, Harry?" asked Gwendolen.

"They would symbolize my feelings," said Lord Bampton. "But I'm very happy."

And so was Gwen, though she was a little nervous when her lover called at Warrington Grange a few days later. Even Mrs. Oakhurst did not know how far matters had really advanced, but the Colonel showed no irascibility when she hinted, not vaguely, that his daughter had made a more than notable conquest. It is true that he searched his mind for objections, but he owned presently that he had heard nothing against his would-be son-in-law save that he was, perhaps, somewhat eccentric in his devotion to the animal kingdom.

"Still, that's nothing, and if he don't shoot or hunt it can't be helped. It's his loss, not mine," said the Colonel. "I don't care a—a continental! He may come here with his wild horses if he likes, or with a chimpanzee! Didn't I hear he keeps 'em?"

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"Will he really bring one with him?" asked Mrs. Oakhurst, anxiously. "I don't quite think I should care for a chimpanzee to come here. The animal might break something."

"Let him bring a gorilla if he likes, and break up the house," said the Colonel, chuckling. "I'll tell Benson that if Lord Bampton turns up with a Polar bear or a Bengal tiger it's to come into the drawing-room. For I'll say this much, that on thinking it over, my dear, there's not a man in England I'd prefer for a son-in-law. I remember Dicky Brown, who knows everyone on earth, sayin' Bampton had the manners of Lord Chesterfield and the morals of the Archbishop of Canterbury, while as for property, he owns half this county and a coal-mine in Yorkshire. If he brings the Zoo you'll see me take it like a lamb! By the Lord Harry, like a lamb!"

"It ate part of a cushion tassel."

"Look here, Benson," said the Colonel a little later, "Lord Bampton will call this afternoon about four."

"Yes, sir," said the butler.

"If everything isn't spick and span and as bright as blazes, there will be appointments vacant in this infernal neighbourhood," cried the Colonel, fiercely. "And if that damned Thompson drops the tea-tray again I'll drag him out into the garden and cut his throat from ear to ear."

"I will attend to everything myself, sir," said Benson.

"And another thing," said the Colonel, "his lordship is fond of pets."

"Yes, sir," said the butler.

"And I understand he takes them about with him," said the Colonel. "So if he brings a chimpanzee or a gorilla with him, it's to come into the drawing-room."

"How shall I know if it's a chimpanzee or a gorilla, sir?" asked the butler.

"By its bite, of course," replied the Colonel. "But when I say a chimpanzee or a gorilla, I mean any livin' thing—a Polar bear, or a Bengal tiger, or billy-goat. Do you understand clearly—quite clearly?"

"Quite clearly, sir," said the butler, who by now was prepared to usher into the drawing-room any animal whatsoever, even if it were an elephant or a crocodile.

"I'm to know it by its bite, am I?" he said, bitterly. "At times there's no knowin' what to make of the Colonel. He's the most harbitrary gent in the county."

It was about a quarter to four when his lordship's car, driven unostentatiously by himself, stayed outside the imposing front entrance of Warrington Grange. By one of those highly remarkable coincidences which seem to happen in order to bring the pure logical sequence of the universe into contempt, a handsome young billy-goat, about three parts grown, and that very day imported into the village by the blacksmith, had broken loose from its tether and wandered into the Colonel's grounds. Finding rich feed there, he had satiated his appetite, and was now resolved to satisfy the curiosity which seems inherent in the species. Having been brought up by hand, he was of an amiable and kindly disposition, and well-disposed towards humanity. It may be, of course, that Lord Bampton's fondness for pets of all kinds was by some mysterious means communicated to the goat, for the lively animal rushed from behind the car just as Lord Bampton alighted. The genial goat, pleased to be with company after a period of solitude, uttered a friendly baa as he mounted the steps side by side with the expected and honoured guest. At that very moment Benson appeared at the door, and Lord Bampton was ushered into the drawing-room with the goat following him. The butler, being much relieved that he was under no necessity to recognize the species of this unlikely pet by its bite, considered himself peculiarly fortunate in finding it not only gentle but tractable, and so much attached to its master that it entered the room without being coerced or chased into doing so.

Colonel Oakhurst was alone in the drawing-room when the curious pair entered. Mrs. Oakhurst considered it advisable to leave them alone for a while in order that Lord Bampton might be at full liberty to speak to Gwendolen's father. She and Gwen therefore waited a while in the library.

"I am delighted to meet you, Lord Bampton," said Colonel Oakhurst, "and as my wife and daughter are for the moment not here, you must allow me to introduce myself."

It seemed obvious to Lord Bampton that he and Colonel Oakhurst would be friends. For in order to please his guest the Colonel patted the goat, even while he wondered at his choice of pets, and the visitor was obviously touched by the affection displayed by its owner for this engaging animal. As the goat wandered round the room with all the curiosity characteristic of the race, host and guest alike expatiated upon its merits. It ate part of a cushion tassel, and though the Colonel cursed it in his heart, he smiled with what seemed ferocious tenderness.

"It's a very fine goat," said Lord Bampton. "Very fine indeed."

"Yes, a splendid animal—splendid. I—I love goats," sputtered the Colonel. "It's well-bred, too, dashed well-bred."

"The goat climbed the sofa and eyed a shining bureau which stood close by."

The splendid well-bred goat sampled another sofa-cushion. Lord Bampton couldn't help wondering at the splendid well-bred calm of his host. For, judging merely by his complexion and his fierce white moustache, he would have thought him rather more explosive than dynamite. It was odd that Gwen had not mentioned her father's passion for pets.

"I understand you have an uncommon love for animals yourself," said the Colonel.

"Immense," said Lord Bampton, fervently following the line of agreement indicated. "I adore them."

"You don't draw the line anywhere?" asked the Colonel, as the goat climbed the sofa and eyed a shining bureau which stood close by.

"Absolutely nowhere," said Lord Bampton.

"Have you many pets of this kind?"

"Oh, yes, I have a most delightful pet lamb."

"Is it at all mischievous?" asked the Colonel.

"At times," said Lord Bampton; "but, like you, I love to see animals happy and active."

The happy and active goat made a wonderful spring and landed safely on the bureau.

"How beautifully he jumps!" cried the Colonel, wishing he could boil the animal in a brass pan.

"Magnificently!" said Lord Bampton, thinking his host must be mad to allow a goat in such a beautiful room. "But won't he break something?"

"It doesn't matter if he does," said the Colonel, looking at the goat as if he were hypnotized. "I—I rather want something broken."

"You do? Isn't that china good?"

"Not if the goat likes to break it," said the Colonel. "This room has been just the same for the last hundred years, and I'm tired of it, fairly wearied out by it."

The goat, after balancing himself in the most beautiful manner, jumped from the bureau upon a table, and only dislodged an old punch-bowl.

"He jumps very skilfully," said Lord Bampton. "I thought he might bring everything down. How he does enjoy himself!"

"True," said the Colonel. "It affords me the deepest pleasure to see animals enjoy themselves. Some don't! Some men hate to! I absolutely know men who would cut that goat's throat, or boil it, or fry it!"

"Do you really?" asked Lord Bampton. "There is no end to human cruelty. I have rarely seen a goat who could jump better. You don't mind him chewing that curtain?"

"Not in the least," said Colonel Oakhurst. "It's old brocade, very old, too old! Let him do as he likes."

"You almost excel me in your love of animals," said Lord Bampton, warmly, "but there is, I maintain, no sign of an amiable nature so certain. I try all my friends by that test. This particular goat is really a most remarkable animal, and seems to have immense intellectual curiosity."

"It looks like it," growled the Colonel. "Now just you watch him! He's going to jump on that table."

"It looks a highly polished and very slippery table," said his guest; "will he be able to keep his footing? I am curious to see."

The goat made a spring and, landing on the table, slid with all four feet together, and only brought up on the edge.

"He seems to have scratched the polished surface," said Lord Bampton. "Do you mind his scratching it?"

"Oh, no, not in the least," said the Colonel, with powerfully concentrated calm. "The table belonged to my great-grandfather, and it's high time it was scratched. Till now there wasn't a scratch on it."

"Does Mrs. Oakhurst like goats?" asked Lord Bampton.

The Colonel chewed at his lips and made curious sounds.

"Yes, she has a perfect passion for them. But being, as most women are, a trifle uncertain in her temper, she is apt to take a dislike to a particular goat."

"Surely not to this very delightful animal?" asked the courteous guest, with an air of warm interested surprise at the bare possibility.

"What! dislike a goat like that?" roared the Colonel. "Such an active, inquiring animal! Oh, no! Why, if it was a simple dull goat she would sell it, and buy another like that!"

The goat immediately demonstrated that it was not dull by springing from the hitherto unscratched table that had belonged to the Colonel's great-grandfather to one which had belonged to his grandmother, and brought a large silver bowl with a crash to the ground as he and the table-cover and the bowl slid off together. With beautiful agility the goat avoided damage to himself, and, making a pleasing little buck, proceeded to eat some flowers from the bowl and drink a little of the water as it meandered over the parquet floor.

"And Miss Oakhurst?" asked Lord Bampton, wondering what he should do when they were married if Gwen introduced goats into the drawing-room of Woodhurst.

"She also likes 'em—adores 'em," gasped the Colonel, wondering if a rich and noble son-in-law were worth the price he was paying.

"Does she feel towards them as you do?"

"Oh, no!" said the Colonel. "I absolutely defy her to come up to the feelings with which I regard this goat. She couldn't do it! My feelings with regard to this goat are indescribable, perfectly indescribable!"

"They do you honour," said Lord Bampton.

THE goat now inspected an old Venetian mirror and, discovering a rival in it, after a few preliminary bucks rose up and charged the other goat, which so obviously intended to charge him. There was a fearful crash, and after a moment's surprise at his sudden victory the successful warrior sought other fields.

"I'm afraid he's broken that mirror," said Lord Bampton.

"It's time it was broken, full time," said the Colonel, desperately. "It's—it's only an old Venetian thing a silly ancestor of mine brought to England. I'll order a nice new one from Tottenham Court Road."

It was certainly remarkable that such a man should speak like that of an old Venetian mirror, but as Lord Bampton knew those who owned goats became mad so far as goats were concerned, a very common observation among those who kept other animals and went insane in other ways, he felt he could say nothing. The Colonel also felt for the moment that he could say nothing. A determination of blood to the head seemed to threaten him with apoplexy, and he was perfectly aware that his complexion was

"The goat now inspected an old Venetian mirror and, discovering a rival in it, charged the other goat."

that of a ripe prize tomato as his hands shook with the madly repressed desire to strangle Lord Bampton's goat without delay. To save his own life and that of this accursed animal it was necessary for him to quit the room at all costs. He choked as he said he must leave his guest for a moment.

"I'll see if my wife and daughter have got back," he sputtered. "You don't mind if I leave you and the goat for a minute?"

"Not at all," said Lord Bampton; "we shall no doubt enjoy ourselves while you are away."

AND even as the Colonel hastened blindly to the door the goat obviously took a fancy to something upon the mantelpiece. It was perhaps a piece of old Chelsea, or the photograph of the Colonel in a silver frame. The animal was not at all awed by the difficult approach to his desire, and Lord Bampton watched him with great curiosity, being firmly convinced it was not the first time the animal had been up there. By a very skilful use of a sofa, an occasional table, and the back of an easy-chair, Billy achieved his desire, and stood with all four feet together on the summit of his Matterhorn.

"Bravo, Billy!" said his lordship, and Billy baaed.

And so did the Colonel in the passage. For he ran against his wife and Gwendolen.

"How—how do you like him?" they asked, eagerly.

It was then that the Colonel baaed and made strange and peculiar noises.

"What is it? Oh, what is it?" they cried, in chorus.

"That—that accursed Bampton," said the Colonel, "he's wreckin' the house, fairly wreckin' it!"

"Oh, father," said Gwen, "what *can* you mean? Do, do be calm!"

"Ain't I calm?" roared the Colonel, as he tugged at his collar. "I'm so calm it's killin' me. The goat—the goat!"

"Tom, what goat are you speaking of?" asked his wife. "Tell us, do tell us!"

"Lord Bampton's goat, his pet goat that he brought with him," gasped the Colonel. "He says it's a splendid well-bred goat with amazin' intellectual curiosity, and by the Holy Poker if you want real cold-blooded calmness go in and see his infernal well-bred lordship fairly eggin' on the animal to do more damage! I think he must be mad, for there's nothing left—nothing! The room's a wreck, and so am I, and every time it smashed something he smiled, and said it was a well-bred goat, or a fine goat, or that it jumped beautifully, and I—what did I do?—why, I said, curse me! that it was a damned well-bred goat when the infernal beast was wrecking my house, and that it was a very, very fine goat—oh, lord!—and that it jumped, oh, so beautifully! Go in and see for yourselves. There, listen!"

And what they heard was the fall of a brass tray.

"Why the infernal thing must be on the mantelpiece—or perhaps his mad master is!" gurgled the Colonel. "Look here, Mary, I can't stand this, I can't!"

And the unhappy old gentleman took several short runs up and down the passage.

"There must be some mistake——" began his wife.

"Go in, go in and see!" said the Colonel. "Let me stay here. I'll put my head under the tap in the bathroom, and come back presently."

And he took a longer run for the bathroom.

"What shall we do?" asked Gwendolen's mother. "You said he was everything a man should be."

"And so he is," said Gwen, firmly. "I don't care if he does keep goats. I'll cure him of that later. Whatever happens, you must keep calm. Come in, or I'll go by myself."

Thus encouraged, Mrs. Oakhurst entered the drawing-room, and nothing but the

sense of *noblesse oblige* kept her from uttering wild yells worthy of an East-end lady when the cat breaks ornaments in the parlour. For upon the mantelpiece, the lambrequin of which she had embroidered with her own hands, the goat was now disporting himself. At every step something came into the fender, and at every crash the goat was more and more pleased with himself. It seemed also that he pleased Lord Bampton, who did not observe the ladies come in.

" Bravo, Billy ! " said his lordship.

" Baa ! " said Billy.

" You're simply magnificent, Billy," said his lordship, " and the most remarkable goat I ever saw."

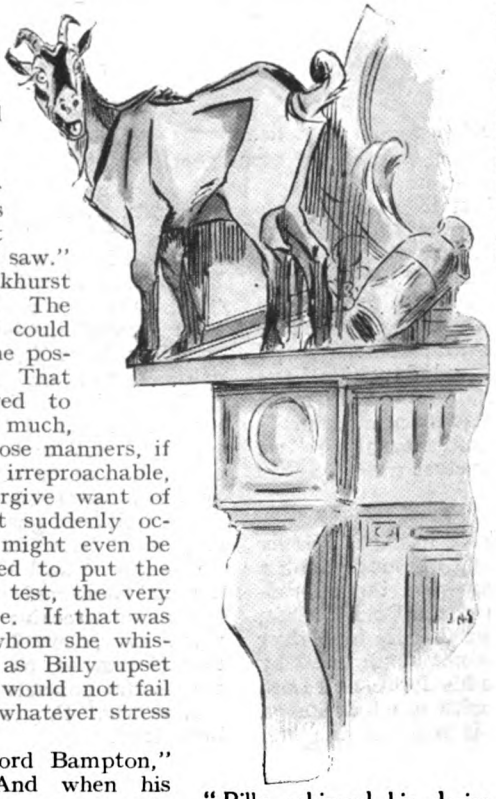
By this time Mrs. Oakhurst had recovered herself. The damage was done, and could not be undone. But the possible match remained. That his lordship had desired to meet Gwendolen was much, but Lord Bampton, whose manners, if eccentric in points, were irreproachable, was said never to forgive want of manners in others. It suddenly occurred to her that it might even be that he had determined to put the Oakhursts to a severe test, the very severest he could devise. If that was so, she and Gwen, to whom she whispered her conclusions as Billy upset the other brass tray, would not fail to meet the occasion, whatever stress was put upon them.

" Good afternoon, Lord Bampton," said Mrs. Oakhurst. And when his lordship turned, and saw not only Gwendolen but her mother as well taking matters so sweetly, he was doubly impressed, once by the fact of their calm, and again by the certainty that nothing but a series of similar dramas conducted on many other occasions by Colonel Oakhurst could possibly account for everything.

" As my husband is detained for a moment, my daughter must introduce us," said Mrs. Oakhurst.

As was only natural, the conversation turned cheerfully and lightly upon goats in general, and particularly upon the goat in the room.

" The goat really seems to be enjoying himself to-day," said Mrs. Oakhurst, settling herself in the settee, from which she had an admirable view of the Matterhorn and the goat upon its dangerous traverse.



" Billy achieved his desire and stood on the summit of his Matterhorn."

" Colonel Oakhurst made the same remark," said Lord Bampton. " It is delightful to find you are all so fond of animals."

" I told you I adored them," said Gwendolen, smiling.

" Do you like goats as well as your father?" asked his lordship.

" Even more," said Gwendolen, truthfully.

Lord Bampton allowed himself the trifling relaxation of a look of mild wonder.

" Dear me, you don't say so," he remarked. " Still, they have a peculiar elegance of their own, and it does not really surprise me. I can forgive anyone anything who is fond of animals. I think, by the way, that the one on the mantelpiece is measuring with his eye the distance from his perch and your settee, Mrs. Oakhurst."

But before he or Mrs. Oakhurst could move, the goat launched himself into the air and, missing her head by some inches, landed on the bare parquet floor and slid for ten feet, thus well displaying the peculiar elegance for which his lordship commended the goat family. Mrs. Oakhurst, although it was the first time in her life that a goat had jumped over her from a mantelpiece, displayed a high-bred calm which pleased their guest, and led to the further reflection that if her mother was thus attuned to the peculiar harmonies of the Colonel's mind, and preserved the Horatian precept of keeping cool when in difficulties, her daughter was likely to make an equally good wife. Thus every action of the goat and Mrs. Oakhurst and Gwendolen riveted the fetters of love upon Lord Bampton.

Leaving the Himalayas of the mantelpiece, the goat proceeded to discover Caucasus in the grand piano, and perhaps imagining that a pile of modern music represented Elburz, leapt upon the piano lightly. The sound that proceeded from the beautiful wood top seemed to excite his curiosity, for he stamped as though trying

"The goat launched himself into the air and, missing her head by some inches, landed on the parquet floor."

the instrument's general resonance, and then climbed on the peak of music.

"You don't mind him being on the piano, I trust?" said Lord Bampton.

"Certainly not," said Gwen, "if it pleases the goat."

"He seems to take great interest in the music," said Lord Bampton.

"He may eat a great deal of Debussy without getting much further," said Gwen, as she saw the animal devouring "L'Après-Midi d'un Faune."

When the goat tired of his meal and walked joyously up and down the keyboard his lordship pointed out how evident it was that the goat was pleased with the simple wood-notes which he evoked, and from it built up a theory as to the origin of much modern music. Gwendolen argued the point eagerly, for she adored the moderns, and Lord Bampton at last admitted that it was only his fun to decry them.

"One cannot deny that there is a simple wildness in the goat's performance which is distinctly pleasing. He has, as the critics say, an idiom of his own, not remotely like the Russian idiom."

"I think it would please my husband," said Mrs. Oakhurst.

"Then he likes music?" asked Lord Bampton.

"No, I cannot say that. What he likes are the simpler noises of the popular song," replied Mrs. Oakhurst. "But I wonder what detains him. Gwendolen, please see if your father is still manipulating that cold-water tap in the bathroom."

"Yes, mother," said Gwendolen.

"Has the water-supply gone wrong?" asked Lord Bampton, as the door closed.

"Oh, no," replied his hostess, "but when he gets excited about anything my husband puts his head under the tap, and he is apt to leave the water running."

"Has he been at all excited this morning?" asked his lordship. "Has anything occurred to disturb him?"

Once more the goat played an accompaniment to the conversation, but with no more than a casual glance at the performer Mrs. Oakhurst replied that the Colonel was not disturbed but excited by the surprising activity of the goat.

"Then I gather that you have never had a goat in here before?" asked Lord Bampton.

"Not that I remember," said Mrs. Oakhurst; "but you must not for a moment, one single moment, imagine that I object. I adore all animals, and so does Gwendolen."

What Lord Bampton said then was a proof of his real passion, for during one terrible moment he feared it was obscuring his discretion. The behaviour of Colonel Oakhurst in allowing valuable and beautiful things to be destroyed by a goat, so distinctly out of place in a drawing-room, could possibly be understood. A wild military experience might account for much. But when Mrs. Oakhurst and Gwendolen as well displayed neither distress nor anxiety, even when the animal became musical, it opened to the lover the awful possibility of the whole household being alike afflicted. And yet it could not be! In town Gwen had spoken as if her father was capable on occasions of going directly contrary to all the dictates of reason. And was this not common in fathers, to say nothing of men generally? Lord Bampton accordingly put hesitation aside and seized the happy moment.

"The sound that proceeded from the piano seemed to excite his curiosity."

"You may have heard it stated that I am somewhat eccentric——"

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Oakhurst. "I cannot credit that!"

"I have known it said," declared Lord Bampton. "But I am only simple and direct. I shall be so now. I wish to be allowed to pay my addresses to your daughter. One moment, I beg! In London I admired her beauty and the eager interest she shared with me in music, but since observing in her whole family such a delightful sympathy with the animal kingdom, I own I am entirely conquered. May I reckon upon your assistance and that of Colonel Oakhurst in the achievement of my dearest wishes?"

And while Mrs. Oakhurst was expressing her sincere pleasure at the prospect Gwendolen was arguing with her outraged father.

"By Jehoshaphat, the man's mad!" said the Colonel, as he rubbed his head with a rough towel; "mad, mad as ten thousand hatters!"

"Oh, no, he is only a little eccentric," urged his daughter. "And mother says she thinks he has done it to try us."

"To try us?" roared the Colonel. "What the devil——"

"To find out if we really love animals," said Gwen, eagerly.

"You go in and tell him I loathe 'em——"

"Do, do be patient, dad. He's really such a dear. See how sweetly calm he is through it all."

"Look here! I'm your poor old father, and I like to behave decently, but if you talk like that you'll—you'll drive me mad.

D'ye want me to have apoplexy? Calm through it all! My Venetian mirror! My great-grandfather's table and a goat! Tell him I won't stand it. I won't! Don't you see I *can't?* Calm, is he? Would he be calm if I visited his house with an unbroken jackass?"

"Oh, father, but this is only a sweet little goat," said Gwen. "He is really a duck."

"No," said the Colonel. "I may be mad and Lord Bampton may be madder, but I am not so mad as to think a goat is a duck. You ain't thinkin' of marryin' him after this, Gwen?"

"Oh, yes, I am," said Gwen.

"Don't," said her father, "don't! I beg you not to. A man that will bring a goat into an inoffensive stranger's house would put rattlesnakes into a baby's cradle. What's your mother doin'?"

"She's so calm, so sweet," said Gwen. "Do, do be patient, father dear, and it will all come right. Please come back now. If you don't he'll think you didn't like him! Oh, even when the goat jumped over mother's head she never turned a hair. She—she was quite majestic!"

"Was she now?" asked the Colonel, as he threw the towel into the corner. "She was majestic! And am I to be majestic too?"

"Yes," said Gwen, "do, do try!"

"Very well," said her father, in sudden gloom. "Come in and see me tryin'. Majestic! Oh, lord!"

THEY were just in time to see Mrs. Oakhurst trying to be majestic, and making very little of it. Although she sustained the conversation with serious sweetness during the absence of her husband and daughter, it was, as she owned later, a very considerable strain on her not to turn round while the goat broke the three lower glass doors of an eighteenth-century bookcase, while she discoursed to Lord Bampton about Gwen and the pictures in the room. But when Mrs. Oakhurst left her seat to point out a drawing attributed to Turner, the goat, having finished his work among the books, made three successive bucks and charged the mistress of the house from behind.

"Majestic!" said the Colonel. "That's your word, Gwen!"

"Oh!" said Mrs. Oakhurst.

"I trust most sincerely you were not hurt," said Lord Bampton, saving her from a fall.

"No, not in the least," said Mrs. Oakhurst, gasping, but recovering herself with great rapidity. "I don't suppose the dear creature meant any harm. It's—it's only his play."

"That's it," said the Colonel, thickly, "it's only his play."

Any further remarks on the part of the Colonel were stayed by the goat assaulting the window.

"He seems to wish to go into the garden," said the guest. "Perhaps it might be as well to let him out."

"It's a very fine garden," said the Colonel, "and in perfect order, quite perfect. That's my beastly gardener's fault. I hate order myself. What I like is ruins, complete, majestic ruins! But my gardener doesn't. He's a very arbitrary gardener, there's no making him see reason. That goat will be a dead goat if you let him out."

"Do I gather you would rather the goat remained here?" said Lord Bampton.

"Oh, no," said the Colonel; "he seems cramped here. Would you like him to look at the rest of the house?"

"That is as you please, of course," said the guest. "Do you usually let goats go everywhere, or do you keep them to this particular room?"

"I don't keep 'em anywhere," said the Colonel, choking. "They only come in as visitors—just as visitors."

"Yes, only as welcome visitors," said Mrs. Oakhurst, eyeing her husband anxiously.

"Just as occasional visitors," said Gwendolen, sweetly. "Do you allow them all over your house, Lord Bampton?"

"I beg your pardon?" said Lord Bampton. "Do I allow goats all over my house? Oh, no, never! I don't in the least mind what they do elsewhere, but I draw the line there."

The Colonel jumped to his feet.

"Father!" said his daughter.

"I can't be majestic any more," roared the Colonel. "I must speak, I must! What's more, I will. Do you mean to say, Lord Bampton, that you never allow your goat to enter your house? Do you mean to tell us that you are so confoundedly unkind to a precious pet like a half-grown billy-goat as never to let him wreck a room full of valuable furniture, never to climb upon the mantelpiece, never to smash a few ancient mirrors, and, most of all, never to butt a visitor from behind?"

"Certainly not," said Lord Bampton, warmly. "I am, I may say, notoriously fond of animals, but though it affords me no inconsiderable pleasure to see others even more attached and devoted to them, the very last thing I myself should allow is a goat, however well-bred, to be in any of my own rooms. What goats, or other pet animals, do in other houses is, of course, a matter of perfect indifference to me."

"Stop," said Colonel Oakhurst; "stop before I break a blood-vessel! Perfect indifference! My hat!"

The Colonel's agitation was now so obvious that it would have been ill-breeding on the part of the calmest nobleman in the kingdom not to notice it. Lord Bampton did notice it.

"Did I say anything particularly remarkable?" he asked, with perhaps a tinge of rebuke in his voice.

"Oh, no!" said the Colonel. "After all that's happened, what you said in the way of not carin' a continental if I had a house over my head or not seemed like a long drink on a hot day! But, by this goat and all the goats that ever reared overend in a cabbage garden, there's nothing more to be said. It's no go. It can't be done. I won't allow it, I'd rather die first."

"Than do what, dad?" asked Gwen.

The Colonel gasped, and again tugged at his collar.

"You—you know! You can't marry Lord Bampton, you can't. I won't have it. He's mad, mad, quite mad!"

Mrs. Oakhurst rose in haste. Gwen made a step towards her lover, who looked the picture of well-bred amazement. After his own apparently sound doubts of the Colonel's entire sanity it was strange to discover that for some peculiar reason his own was doubted.

"Oh, father!" said Gwen.

"Oh, Tom!" said his wife.

"Don't Tom me!" roared the Colonel, savagely. "I forbid it, all of it. I won't have it. Mad, mad as a hatter!"

LORD BAMPTON perceived that he was in an awkward situation. He therefore sought to temporize with the Colonel, knowing that to contradict a maniac in the acute stage was, by those best acquainted with the insane, considered both useless and dangerous. It seemed possible to the guest that he had unwittingly shown disapproval of the goat being in the drawing-room. He hastened to remove this impression.

"Perhaps I was wrong in saying something which seemed to imply a lack of feeling for this poor animal," he said, very earnestly. "I assure you, Colonel Oakhurst, that when I said that what it did here was a matter of indifference to me I by no means meant that I was not charmed and interested by it. I trust you will not think me inconsiderate to animals."

Colonel Oakhurst went the colour of an oak-tree in autumn.

"Look here!" he said, and then stopped to catch his breath.

"Pray continue," said Lord Bampton.

"Take your damned goat out of my house," roared the Colonel, "or by the Holy Poker I'll get a gun and shoot it!"

"Take *whose* goat?" asked Lord Bampton.

"Whose goat? Whose goat?" repeated the Colonel.

"Yes, whose?"

"Yours! Yours!" said the Colonel.

And Lord Bampton, for the first time losing the calm which became him so well, sat down in the nearest chair with a positive thump. The goat came up to him, and his lordship absolutely glared at it.

"My—my goat?"

"Yes. Take it away, take it away quick! Before I explode," said the Colonel. "Or else I'll do your cursed pet a mischief."

And Lord Bampton fairly collapsed.

"It's not my goat," he said. "Oh, no, it's not mine! I never saw the awful animal before."

"You never—never saw it before?" asked the Colonel, in a curious choked whisper.

"Never, never!" said his lordship. "Why, naturally enough, I thought it was yours!"

It was the Colonel's turn to sit down. He did so, and opened his mouth three times before he could speak.

"Oh, you thought it mine, did you?" he asked. "May—may I ask if you thought I was twice as mad as a March hare?"

"The possibility never entered my head," said Lord Bampton, earnestly. "I merely thought that your choice of a household pet was uncommon and the latitude you gave it surprising."

The Colonel mopped his face.

"But—but it came in with you," he urged. "I saw it myself."

"So did your butler," replied Lord Bampton, "but that doesn't make him *my* butler. If I had come in with a tiger after me, would that have made him my tiger? Of course, I thought it was your goat."

"Then—then whose goat is it?" asked the Colonel, fiercely. "If Benson can't tell me he'll be no one's butler in two shakes of a lamb's tail! Let me get at him!"

And then Gwen, who had been speechless, burst into laughter, and interrupted her father at the door.

"Dad, didn't you tell poor Benson that Lord Bampton loved pets, and that if he brought one it was to come into this room?" she asked.

"You did, Tom," said Mrs. Oakhurst; "yes, you did!"

"So I did," said the Colonel, "so I did! But I never, never, never reckoned on a goat! Look at the fiend now! He's eating my old Persian rug. Let him! What's it matter?"

But it did matter, for the goat was disappointed with green worsted, and eyed the whole party with malignancy.

"I apologize, Lord Bampton," said the Colonel. "I apologize humbly, and more than humbly. I—I——"

"Don't mention it," said Lord Bampton. "I have a confession to make."

"The Colonel didn't deliver the goods. The goat did that."

The Colonel started.

"Look here, you ain't by any chance goin' to say it's your goat after all, are you? I tell you I couldn't, couldn't bear it!"

"No, Colonel Oakhurst," said Lord Bampton. "But you seem to know that I came here to ask permission to pay my addresses to Miss Oakhurst. I confess such a question would have been disingenuous, since I have her permission to ask for her hand."

"My—my hat!" said the Colonel. "You don't say so!"

"I do say so," replied Lord Bampton, firmly.

"Speak, Tom, speak," said Mrs. Oakhurst.

But the Colonel couldn't speak. He looked round, and, catching Gwen's beaming eye, saw the only thing to do. He took her hand and made a step towards Lord Bampton. But he didn't deliver the goods. The goat did that.

(*For reasons which will be obvious to those who remember her letters—and particularly one written in* 1738 *to the Duchess of Portland—this little story is inscribed to the charming memory of Elizabeth Montagu, Queen of the Blue-Stockings.*)

A MAN OF LETTERS

by

STACY AUMONIER

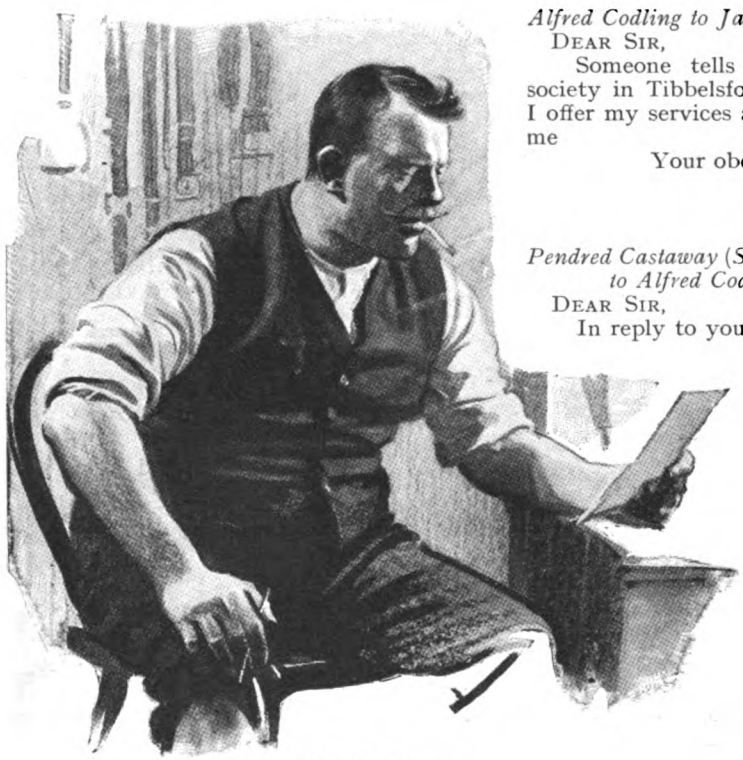
ILLUSTRATED BY CHAS·CROMBIE

ALFRED CODLING to Annie Phelps.

MY DEAR ANNIE,

I got into an awful funny mood lately. Youl think Im barmy. It comes over me like late in the evenin when its gettin dusky. It started I think when I was in Egypt. Nearly all us chaps who was out there felt it a bit I think. When you was on sentry go in the dessert at night it was so quite and missterius. You felt you wanted to *know* things if you know what I mean. Since Ive come back and settled in the saddlery again I still feel it most always. A kind of discontented funny feelin if you know what I mean. Well old girl what I mean is when were spliced up and settled over in Tibbelsford I want to be good for you and I want to know all about things and that. Well Im goin to write to Mr. Weekes whose a gentleman and who lives in a private house near the church. They say he is a littery society and if it be so Im on for joinin it. Youl think Im barmy wont you. It isnt that old dear. Me that has always been content to do my job and draw my screw on Saturday and that. Youl think me funny. When youve lived in the dessert you feel how old it all is. You want something and you dont know what it is praps its just to improve yourself and that. Anyway there it is and I'll shall write to him. See you Sunday. So long dear.

ALF.



Alfred Codling.

Alfred Codling to James Weekes.

DEAR SIR,

Someone tells me you are a littery society in Tibbelsford. In which case may I offer my services as a member and believe me

Your obedient servant

ALFRED CODLING.

Pendred Castaway (Secretary to James Weekes) to Alfred Codling.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 17th inst,. I beg to inform you that Mr. James Weekes is abroad. I will communicate the contents of your letter to him.

Yours faithfully,

PENDRED CASTAWAY.

Annie Phelps to Alfred Codling.

MY DEAR ALF,

You are a dear old funny old bean. What *is* up with you. I expeck you are just fed up. You havent had another touch of the fever have you. I will

come and look after you Sunday. You are a silly to talk about improvin considerin the money you are gettin and another rise next spring you say. I expeck you got fed up in the dessert and that didnt you. I expeck you wanted me sometimes eh ? I shouldnt think the littery society much cop myself. I can lend you some books. Cook is a great reader. She has nearly all Ethel M. Dells and most of Charles Garvice. She says she will lend you some if you promiss to cover in brown paper and not tare the edges. They had a big party here over the weekend a curnel a bishop two gentleman and some smart women one very nice she gave me ten bob. We could go to the picturs come Wendesday if agreeble. Milly is walkin out with a feller over at Spindlehurst in the grossery a bit flashy I dont like him much. Mrs. Vaughan had one of her attacks on Monday. Lord she does get on my nerves when shes like that. Well be good and cheerio must now close. Love and kisses till Sunday.

ANNIE.

James Weekes (Malaga, Spain), to Alfred Codling.

DEAR SIR,

My secretary informs me that you wish to join our literary society in Tibbelsford. It is customary to be proposed and seconded by two members. Will you kindly send me your qualifications ?

Yours faithfully,

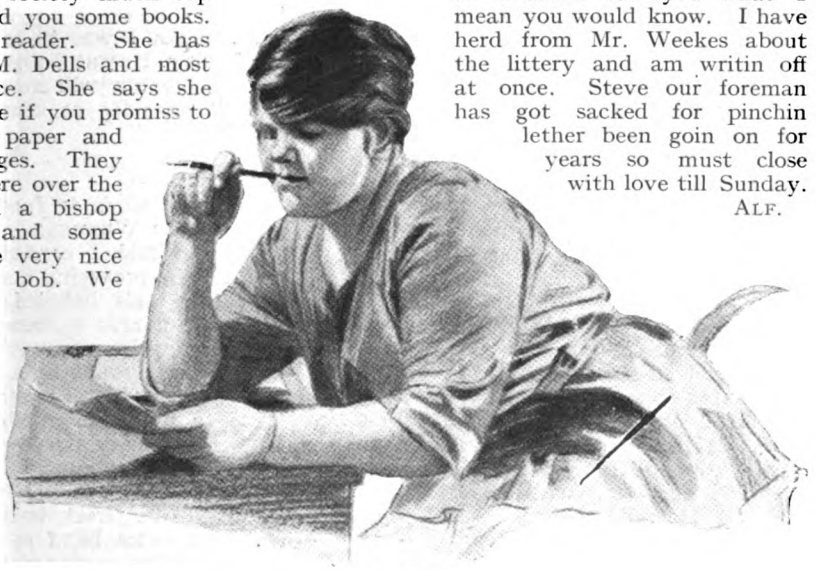
JAMES WEEKES.

Alfred Codling to Annie Phelps.

MY DEAR ANNIE,

Please thank cook for the two books which I am keepin rapt up and will not stain. I read the Eagles mate and think it is a pritty story. As you know dear I am no fist at explaning myself. At the picturs the other night you were on to me again about gettin on and that. It isnt that. Its difficul to explane what I mean. I expect I will always be able to make good money enough. If you havent been throu it you cant know what its like. Its somethin else I want if you know what I mean. To be honest I did not like the picturs the other night. I thought they were silly but I like to have you sittin by me and to holding your hand. If I could tell you what I mean you would know. I have herd from Mr. Weekes about the littery and am writin off at once. Steve our foreman has got sacked for pinchin lether been goin on for years so must close with love till Sunday.

ALF.



Annie Phelps.

Alfred Codling to James Weekes.

DEAR SIR,

As regards your communication you ask what are my quallifications. I say I have no quallifications sir nevertheless I am wishful to join the littery. I will be candid with you sir. I am not what you might call a littery or eddicated man at all. I am in the saddlery. I was all throw Gallipoli and Egypt, l/corporal in the 2/15th Mounted Blumshires. It used to come over me like when I was out there alone in the dessert. Prehaps sir you will understand me when I say it for I find folks do not understand me about it not even the girl I walk out with Annie Phelps who is as nice a girl a feller could wish. Prehaps sir you have to have been throw it if you know what I mean. When you are alone at night in the dessert its all so big and quite you want to get to know things and all about things if you know what I mean sir so prehaps you will pass me in the littery.

Your obedient servant,

ALFRED CODLING.

Annie Phelps to Alfred Codling.

DEAR ALF,

You was funny Sunday. I don't know whats up with you. You never used to be

like that glum I call it. Is it thinking about this littery soc turnin your head or what. Milly says you come into the kitchin like a boiled oul you was. Cheer up dear till Sunday week. ANNIE.

James Weekes, to Alfred Codling.

DEAR SIR,

Allow me to thank you for your charming letter. I feel that I understand your latent desires perfectly. I shall be returning to Tibbelsford in a week's time, when I hope to make your acquaintance. I feel sure that you will make a desirable member of our Literary Society.

Yrs. cordially,
JAMES WEEKES.

James Weekes to Samuel Childers.

MY DEAR SAM,

I received the enclosed letter yesterday, and hasten to send it on to you. Did you ever read anything more delightful? We must certainly get Alfred Codling into our society. He sounds the kind of person who would make a splendid foil to old Baldwin with his tortuous metaphysics—that is if we can only get him to talk.

Yours ever,
J. W.

Samuel Childers to James Weekes.

MY DEAR CHAP,

You are surely not serious about the ex-corporal! I showed his letter to Fanny. She simply screamed with laughter. But, of course, you mean it as a joke proposing him for the "littery." Hope to see you on Friday.

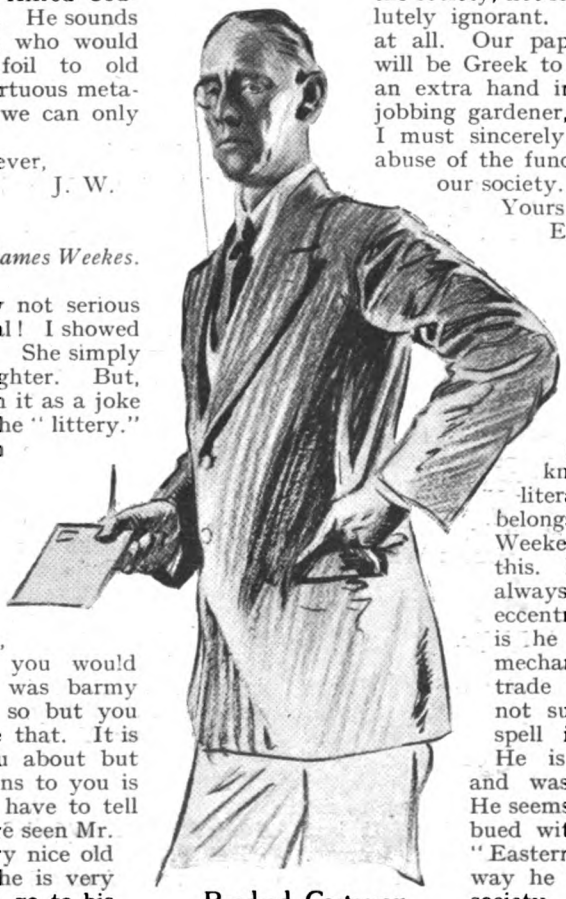
Ever yours,
S. C.

Alfred Codling to Annie Phelps.

MY DEAR ANNIE,

I was afraid you would begin to think I was barmy dear I always said so but you mustnt take it like that. It is difficult to tell you about but you know my feelins to you is as always. Now I have to tell you dear that I have seen Mr. Weekes he is a very nice old gentlemen indeed he is very kind he says I can go to his hous anytime and read his books he has hundreds and hundreds. I have nevver seen so many books you have to have a ladder to clime up to some of them he is very kind he says he shall proppose me for the littery soc and I can go when I like he ast me all about mysel and that was very kind and pleesant he told me all about what books I was to read and that so I think dear I wont be goin to the picturs Wendesday but will meet you by the Fire statesion Sunday as usual your lovin

ALF.



Pendred Castaway.

Ephraim Baldwin to James Weekes.

MY DEAR WEEKES,

I'm afraid I cannot understand your attitude in proposing and getting Childers to second this hobbledehoy called Alfred Codling. I have spoken to him, and I am quite willing to acknowledge that he may be a very good young man in his place. But why join a literary society? Surely we want to raise the intellectual standard of the society, not lower it? He is absolutely ignorant. He knows nothing at all. Our papers and discussions will be Greek to him. If you wanted an extra hand in your stables, or a jobbing gardener, well and good, but I must sincerely protest against this abuse of the fundamental purposes of our society.

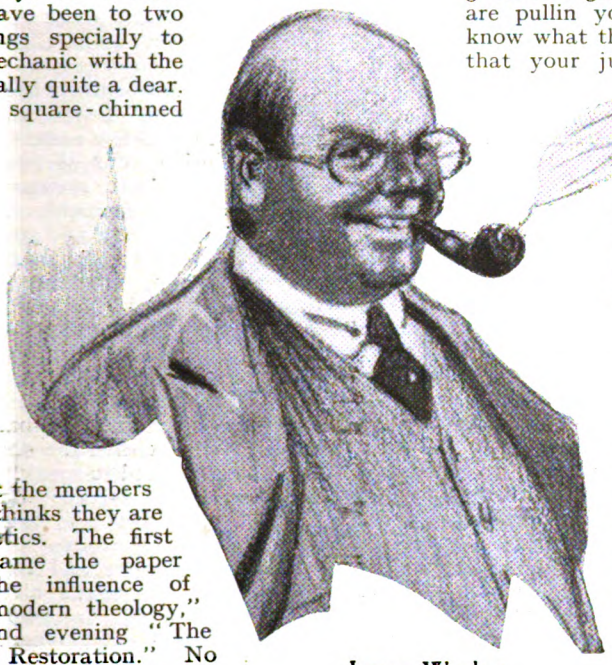
Yours sincerely,
EPHRAIM BALDWIN.

Fanny Childers to Elspeth Pritchard.

DEAR OLD THING,

I must tell you about a perfect scream that is happening here. You know the Tibbelsford literary society that Pa belongs to and also Jimmy Weekes? Well, it's like this. Dear old Jimmy is always doing something eccentric. The latest thing is he has discovered a mechanic in the leather trade with a soul! (I'm not sure I ought not to spell it the other way.) He is also an ex-soldier and was out in the East. He seems to have become imbued with what they called "Eastern romanticism." Anyway he wanted to join the society, and old Weekes

rushed Pa into seconding him, and they got him through. And now a lot of the others are up in arms about it—especially old Baldwin—you know, we call him "Permanganate of Potash." If you saw him you'd know why, but I can't tell you. I have been to two of the meetings specially to observe the mechanic with the soul. He is really quite a dear. A thick-set, square-chinned little man with enormous hands, with a heavy silver ring on the third finger of his left, and tattoo marks on his right wrist. He sits there with his hands spread out on his knees and stares round at the members as though he thinks they are a lot of lunatics. The first evening he came the paper was on "The influence of Erasmus on modern theology," and the second evening "The Drama of the Restoration." No wonder the poor soul looks bewildered. He never says a word. How is Tiny? I was in town on Thursday and got a duck of a hat. Do come over soon.



James Weekes.

Crowds of love,

FAN.

James Weekes to Alfred Codling.

MY DEAR CODLING,

I quite appreciate your difficulty. I would suggest that you read the following books, in the order named. You will find them in my library :—

Jevons's "Primer of Logic,"
Welton's "Manual of Logic,"
Brackenbury's "Primer of Psychology,"
and Professor James's "Text-book of Psychology."

Do not be discouraged.

Sincerely yours,

J. WEEKES.

Annie Phelps to Alfred Codling.

DEAR ALF,

I dont think you treat me quite fare you says you are sweet on me and that and then you go on in this funny way. It isnt my falt that you got the wind up in Egypt. I dont know what you mean by all this. I wish the ole littery soc was dead and finish. Cook says you probily want a blue pill you was so glum Sunday. Dont you see all these gents and girls and edicated coves are pullin your leg if you dont know what they talkin about and that your just makin a fule of yourself and then what about me you dont think of me its makin me a fule too. Milly says *she* wouldent have no truck with a book lowse so there it is. ANNIE.

Alfred Codling to James Weekes.

DEAR SIR,

I am much oblidged to you for puttin me on them books. It beats me how they work up these things I'm afeard I am not scollard enough to keep the pace with these savins and that. Its the same with the littery. I lissen to the talk and sometimes I think Ive got it and then no. Sometimes I feels angry with the things said I know the speakers wrong but I cant say I feel they wrong but I dont know what to say to say it. Theres some things to big to say isnt that sir. Im much oblidged to you sir for what you done. Beleive me I enjoy the littery altho I most always dont know the talk I know who are the rite ones and who are the rong ones. If you have been throw what I have been throw you would know the same sir. Beleive me your obedient servant,

ALFRED CODLING.

Ephraim Baldwin to Edwin Jope (Secretary to the Tibbelsford Literary Society).

DEAR JOPE,

For my paper on the 19th prox. I propose to discuss "The influence of Hegelism on modern psychology."

Yrs. ever,

EPHRAIM BALDWIN.

Edwin Jope to Ephraim Baldwin.

DEAR MR. BALDWIN,

I have issued the notices of your forth-

coming paper. The subject I am sure will make a great appeal to our members and I feel convinced that we are in for an illuminating and informative evening. With regard to our little conversation on Wednesday last, I am entirely in agreement with you with regard to the quite inexplicable action of Weekes in introducing the "leather mechanic" into the society. It appears to me a quite superfluous effrontery to put upon our members. We do not want to lose Weekes, but I feel that he ought to be asked to give some explanation of his conduct. As you remark, it lowers the whole standard of the society. We might as well admit agricultural labourers, burglars, grooms, and barmaids, and the derelicts of the town. I shall sound the opinion privately of other members. With kind regards,

Yrs. sincerely,

EDWIN JOPE.

Annie Phelps to Alfred Codling.

All right then you stick to your old littery. I am sendin you back your weddin ring you go in and out of that place never thinkin of me. Aunt said how it would be you goin off and cetterer and gettin ideas into your head what do you care I doant think you care at all I expeck ycu meet a lot of these swell heads these men *and* women and you get talkin and thinkin you someone. All these years you away I wated for you faithfull I nevver had a thowt for other fellers and then you go on like this and treat me in this way. Aunt says she wouldnt put up and Milly says a book lowse is worse than no good and so I say goodbye and thats how it is now forever you have brokken my hart.

ANNIE.

Annie Phelps to Alfred Codling.

I cried all nite I didnt mean quite all I says you know how I mene dear Alf if you was only reesonible I doant mind you goin the littery if you eggsplain yourself. For gawds sake meet me tonight by the fire stachon and eggsplain everything.

Your broke hearted

ANNIE.

James Weekes to Samuel Childers.

MY DEAR SAM,

I hope Harrogate is having the desired effect upon you. I was about to say that you have missed few events of any value or interest during your absence, but I feel I must qualify that statement. You have missed a golden moment. The great Baldwin evening has come and gone, and I deplore the fact that you were not there. My sense of gratification, however, is not due to Ephraim himself, but to my unpopular *protégé* and white elephant—Alfred Codling. I tell you, it was glorious! Ephraim spoke for an hour and a half, the usual thing, a dull *rechauffé* of Schopenhauer and Hegel, droning forth platitudes and half-baked sophistries. When it was finished the chairman asked if anyone else wished to speak. To my amazement my ex-lance-corporal rose heavily to his feet. His face was brick-red, and his eyes glowed with anger. He pointed his big fingers at Ephraim and exclaimed, "Yes, talk, talk, talk—that's all it is. There's nothing in it at all," and he hobbled out of the room (you know he was wounded in the right foot). The position, as you may imagine, was a little trying. I did not feel in the mood to stay and make apologies. I hurried after Codling. I caught him up at the end of the lane. I said, "Codling, why did you do that?" He could not speak for a long time, then he said, "I'm sorry, sir. It came over me like, all of a sudden." We walked on. At the corner by Harvey's mill we met a girl. Her face was wet—there was a fine rain falling at the time. They looked at each other, these two, then she suddenly threw out her arms and buried her face on his chest. I realized that this was no place for me, and I hurried on. The following morning I

Ephraim Baldwin.

received the enclosed letter. Please return it to me.

Yrs. ever,
JAMES.

Alfred Codling to James Weekes.

DEAR SIR,

Please to irrase my name from the littery soc. I feel I have treated you bad about it but there it is. I appollogize to you for treatin you bad like this that is all I regret. You have always been kind and pleesant to me lendin me the books and that. I shall always be grateful to you for what you have done. It all came over me sudden like last night while that chap was spoutin out about what you call physology. I had never heard tell on the word till you put me on to it and now they all talk about it. I looked it up in the dicktion and it says something about the science of mind and that chap went on spoutin about it. I had quarrel with my girl we had nevver quarrel before and I was very down abowt it. She is the best girl a feller could wish and I have always said so. Somehow last night while he was spoutin on it came over me sudden I thowt of the nights I had spent alone in the dessert when it was all quite and missterous and big. I had been throw it all sir I had seen my pals what was alive one minnit blown to peices the next I had tramped hunderds of miles and gone without food and watter I had seen hell itsel sir. And when you are always with death like that sir you are always so much alive you are alive and then the next minnit you may be dead and it makes you want to feel in touch like with everythin. You cant hate noone when your like that you think of the other feller over there whose thinkin like you are prehaps and he all alone to lookin up the blinkin stars and it comes over you that its only love that holds us all together love, and nothin else at all my hart was breakin thinkin of Annie what I had treated so bad and what I had been throw and he went on spoutin and spoutin. What does he know about physology. You have to had been very near death to find the big thing thats what I found out and I couldnt tell these littery blokes that thats why I lost my temper and so please to irrase me from the soc. They cant teach me nothin that matters. Ive seen it all and I cant teach them nothin because they havent been throw it. What I have larnt is sir that theres somethin big in our lives apart from gettin on and comfits and good times and so sir I am much oblidged for all you done for me and except my appology for the way I treat you.

Your obedient servant,
ALFRED CODLING.

Edwin Jope.

James Weekes to Edwin Jope.

DEAR JOPE,

In reply to your letter, I cannot see my way to apologize or even to dissociate myself with the views expressed by Mr. Alfred Codling at our last meeting, consequently I must ask you to accept my resignation.

Yours vy truly,
JAMES WEEKES.

Samuel Childers to Edwin Jope.

DEAR JOPE,

Taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case, I must ask you to accept my resignation from the Tibbelsford Literary Society.

Yrs. faithfully,
S. CHILDERS.

Annie Phelps to Alfred Codling.

MY DEAR ALF,

Of course its all right I am all right now dear Alf I will try and be a good wife to you I amnt clevver like you with all your big thowts and that but I will and be a good wife to you Aunt Em is goin to give us that horsehaiir and mother says therell be twenty five pounds comin to me when Uncle Steve pegs out and he has the dropsie all right already. What do you say to Aperil if we can git that cottidge of Mrs Plummers mothers see you Sunday.

xxxxxxxxxxxx love from
ANNIE.

Ephraim Baldwin to Edwin Jope.

DEAR MR. JOPE,

As no apology has been forthcoming to me *from any quarter* for the outrageous

insult I was subjected to on the occasion of my last paper, I must ask you to accept my resignation.

Yrs. faithfully,
EPHRAIM BALDWIN, O.B.E.

Alfred Codling to Annie Phelps.

MY DEAR ANNIE,

You will be plaesed to hear they made me foreman this will mean an increas and so on I think April will be alright Mr. Weekes sent me check for fifty pounds to start farnishin but I took it back I said no I could not accep it havin done nothin to earn it and treatin him so bad over that littery soc but he said yes and he put it in such a way that I accep after all so we shall be alright for fernishin at the present. He was very kind and he says we was to go to him at any time and I was to go on readin the books he says I shall find good things in them but not the littery soc he says he has left it hisself I feel I treated him very bad but I could not stand that feller spoutin and him nevver havin been throw it like what I have. That dog of Charlys killed one of Mrs. Reeves chickins Monday so must now close till Sunday with love from

Your soon husban (dont it sound funny?)

ALF.

Edwin Jope to Walter Bunning.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your letter I beg to say that the Tibbelsford literary society is dissolved.

Yrs. faithfully,
E. JOPE.

ACROSTICS

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 96.

A BISHOP'S motto and a soldier's fame
Inspire our boys to work, and play the game.

1. One word the grain and chaff will separate;
Two words will make success immediate.
2. Give island head; and further hints we note
In words that rhyme with clock, and shell, and goat.
3. Riches and shrub will show, when mixed up well,
His other name, if truth traditions tell.
4. An active quadruped you first select:
Part of the head, and all its tail reject.
5. The word recalls a deed of bygone days,
So it united follows in the phrase.
6. Choose the right foreign port; then may be seen
Three English ones in battle, this, and queen.
7. Descent unbroken may a hint convey,
Therefore a monarch makes it clear as day.
8. When ancient eighth is of a fifth bereft,
The twentieth of present day is left.
9. Twelve-lettered adverb acts most suitably
Till guessed; the central third alone we see.
10. For forty days an English Lent will last;
Some thirty days Mohammedans will fast.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 96 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on July 9th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 95.

THE men who fought to save it should not lack
A home like this at least when they come back.

1. This is truly laughable.
2. Beef dissolved and quaffable.
3. One and individual.
4. One from one—residual?
5. Head-tire of nobility.
6. Floor-mat of utility.
7. This, for days long past, I call
Just a shade bombastical.

1.	C	omi	C
2.	O	x	O
3.	U	ni	T
4.	N	ough	T
5.	T	iar	A
6.	R	u	G
7.	Y	or	E

Solvers who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should enclose a stamped addressed envelope with their letters, and he will endeavour to reply.

Birds as Parents

By

J. ARTHUR THOMSON, M.A., LL.D.,

Regius Professor of Natural History in the University of Aberdeen.

THERE are a few fishes that make nests, like the stickleback, and in the case of the whimsical sea-horse the father fish carries the eggs about in his breast-pocket until they are safely hatched, but the great majority of fishes lay their eggs in the water and care nothing for their fate. To care about them were at once needless and impossible—needless because there are so many, that, even if the infantile mortality is great, there are plenty of survivors left to continue the race with vigour; and impossible for the same reason, that no parent could show care for hundreds of thousands of eggs and offspring. They say that the codfish has two million eggs and the conger-eel ten million, and what is one mother among so many?

The Spawning Solution.

If a race is going to continue, there must be some way of circumventing the chances of death, of getting across the perilous Mirza bridge with its many traps, and one of the ways is to have a huge number of offspring. This is the *spawning solution* of the problem, and we see it very well illustrated every Spring in the common frog, which produces a thousand or ten thousand eggs. These are often laid in very unsuitable places, as if the mother had not much instinct, and the chances against their becoming tadpoles, and against the tadpoles becoming frogs, are prodigious. Yet there are plenty of frogs; the spawning solution works well.

A Better Way.

But there is a better way of securing survival, and that is by parental care. Why it is better will become clearer later on, but it is plain that if the Surinam toad, which carries its eggs in little skin-pockets on her back, secures the continuance of the race with one hundred eggs and young ones at a time, that is vastly more economical than the common toad's method of circumventing the chances of death by producing many hundreds. It is not suggested that the toads deliberate over the alternatives; it is rather that different kinds of constitution lead to different experiments, which are tested by their degree of success. It is very interesting, however, to find that while amphibians as a whole adhere to the spawning solution, there are numerous queer experiments in the direction of parental care. Thus some tree-frogs make a nest of leaves; in the case of Darwin's frog (*Rhinotrema*), from South America, the father carries about a dozen eggs in his mouth; and in more than one kind (*e.g.*, *Nototrema*) there is a brood-pocket—like a far-off hint of a kangaroo's—on the mother's back.

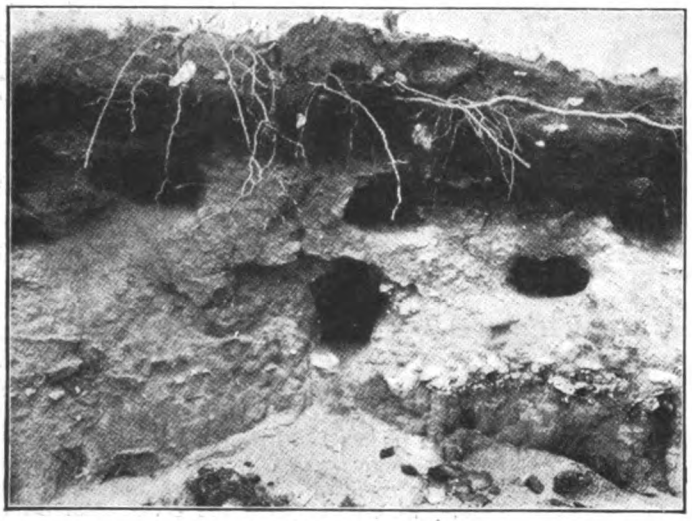
Getting on to Terra Firma.

It was a great event in the history of backboned animals when certain adventurous pioneers conquered the dry land. Some fishes tried it, like the mudfishes; some amphibians tried it, like the toads, which are more or less free from the water after their tadpole-stage is past; but the first backboned animals to become thoroughly terrestrial were certain reptiles. From them there evolved the modern reptiles, the birds, and the mammals. Everyone is clear that sea-snakes and turtles are reptiles that have *gone back* to the waters, and that the same

is true of birds like penguins and mammals like whales. As it is put technically, they are "secondarily aquatic."

The Need for Care.

Now, getting on to dry land had many important consequences, and one was that



1.—Sand-Martins' burrows.

it became necessary in a new way to look after the eggs and the young. For it was no longer possible to lay the eggs and deposit the young just anyhow, as was possible in the sea where the water provided a universal cradle. On the bare ground the eggs would be dried up and the young ones devoured; it is necessary to *take care*, to bury the eggs, to lay them in inaccessible or well-hidden nests, to keep the young ones for a long time within the mother's body, to carry the infants about—in short, to practise parental care. The greater the parental care, the fewer offspring were required to keep the stock agoing, and—these things work round in circles—the fewer the offspring, the easier for the mother to take care of them. To put it in another way, the race of birds, for instance, was continued by types which had progressed in two directions at once—reduction in the size of the family and increase of parental care.

Nests and Nests.

There are plenty of nests on the ground, like the lark's, and others in burrows, like the sand-martin's (Fig. 1), but the typical nest is *a cradle aloft*, and, when one comes to think of it, it was surely a brilliant new idea to construct a cradle in a place away from the dangers of the ground, where the parent bird can brood undisturbed and where the nestlings can be nurtured in safety until they are able to take wing. How many pictures of nests crowd into the mind! The sea-swallow (*Collocalia*) makes a nest like a half-cup of frosted sugar out of the hardened salivary juice of its mouth, and fixes it to the precipitous walls of sea-caves in the Far East—the well-known "edible bird's-nest," a delicacy to the Chinese palate (Fig. 2). The long-tailed tit builds in a bush a globular nest almost entirely composed of feathers (Fig. 3), and it may gather far over two thousand before it is satisfied with its beautiful work of art. The oven-bird (*Furnarius*) of South America builds a clay nest as big as one's head in the fork of a tree; the door is rather to the under side, and leads into an empty room; above this is an upper chamber comfortably upholstered—the nest proper where the eggs are laid. They say that the cock bird requires the assistance of several wives in building the two-roomed nest.

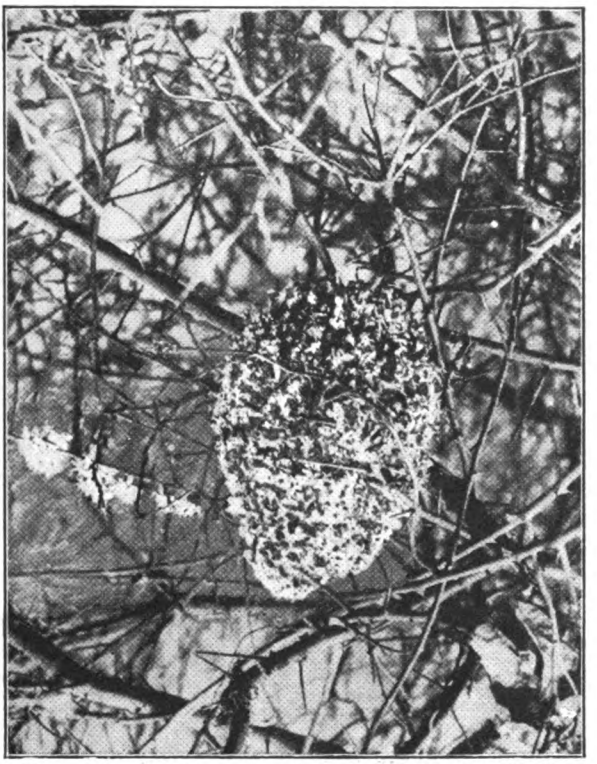
Weaver-Bird and Tailor-Bird.

What a masterpiece is the hanging nest of the weaver-bird, dangling at the end of a branch projecting, it may be, over a pool. There is a long entrance-tube like the leg of a stocking, up which the little bird climbs; then there is an expansion to one side and a bending downwards of the nest proper, as if the foot of the stocking were inflated. The whole is a little like a chemist's retort with the tube hanging vertically downwards. There is no risk of the eggs tumbling out, and there is almost no chance of monkey or snake getting at the nest. When the nest is being woven from strips of grass-leaf and the like, one of the birds may be seen inside the tangle passing the thread through to its mate outside. Hardly less striking is the behaviour of various tailor-birds, who pass grass-leaves through little holes made along the margin of two or three leaves, binding them firmly together, and then proceed to build the nest proper inside (Fig. 4). But we must tear ourselves away from nests and pass to other expressions of parental care.

The Patience of the Brooding Bird.

In some snakes of the python family the mother coils her great length around the eggs,

and this approaches the brooding so characteristic of birds. The uses of brooding or incubation are (1) to supply from the parent's body the warmth that favours the development of the embryo within the egg, a function that is helped by the non-conducting materials of or in the nest; (2) to hide the eggs and nestlings from the eyes of enemies; and (3) to shelter the young birds from the heat of the sun, which tries some of them sorely. Some details are interesting. Thus there are some birds, *e.g.*, albatross and penguin, which show bare patches where the eggs come into direct contact with the warm skin; some brooding birds, *e.g.*, snipe, increase their inconspicuousness by putting soil on their back; some close-sitting birds, like the partridge, give forth no scent when on the nest, so that even a clever dog will pass repeatedly close by the brooding bird in the root of the hedge without showing any awareness; some birds, *e.g.*, eider-duck, draw a coverlet over the eggs when they leave the nest. Little items of this sort are important, for they keep us from taking too easy-going a view of the process of incubation. So much of the business has passed into the domain of instinctive routine, that the bird may behave quite stupidly when brooding. Thus many a pigeon will fail to notice its eggs if removed to a distance of a foot from the nest, and many another will go on slavishly sitting on nothing. But such facts do not reveal the heart of the matter; they simply mean that in normal conditions there is very little risk of anything going wrong, so that the more automatic the brooding becomes the better for all parties. In some birds, *e.g.*, hornbill, albatross,



3.—The globular nest of the Long-Tailed Tit is almost entirely composed of feathers.

2.—The Sea-Swallow's nest is that well-known Chinese delicacy, the edible bird's-nest.

(By permission of the Directors of the Natural History Museum.)

4.—The Tailor-Bird's nest is built within leaves bound together along the margin with grass.

and eagle-owl, all the brooding is on the mother's part; in other cases, *e.g.*, emu and grey Phalarope, it is all on the father's part; in ostrich and oil-bird the female sits by day and the male by night, while pigeons illustrate the ordinary method of irregular alternation.

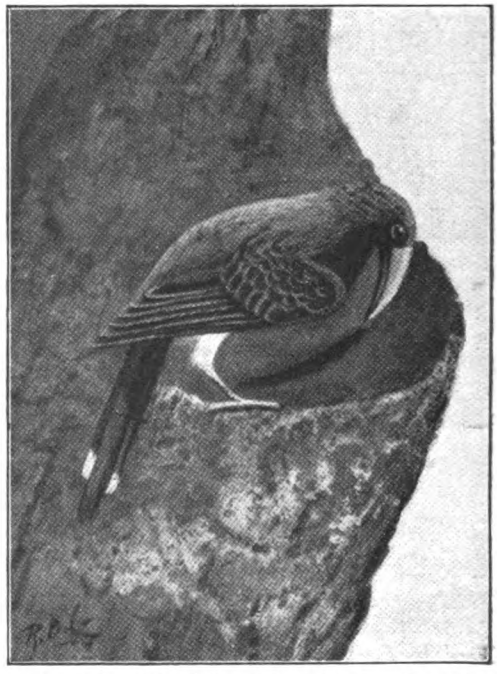
5.—Young Lapwings hatched at an advanced stage of development begin very early to fend for themselves.

Feeding the Young.

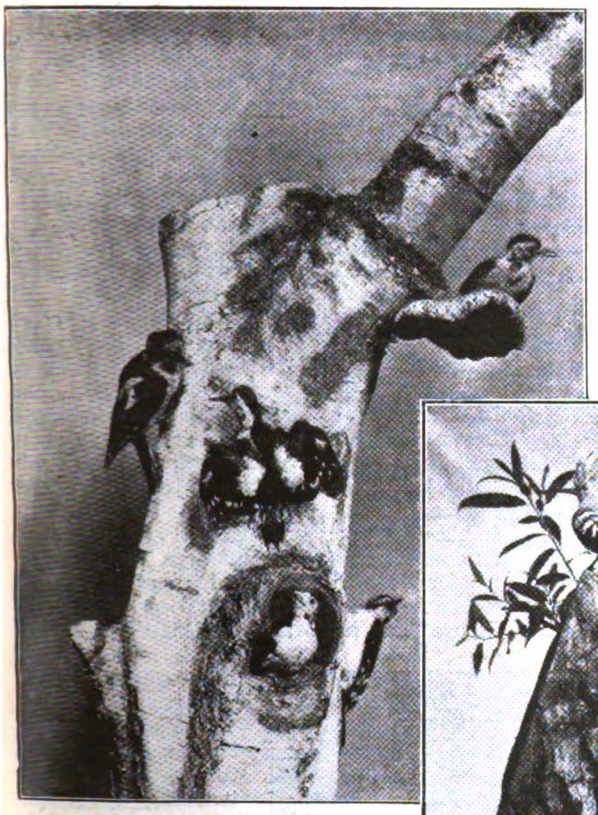
When the young birds are hatched at an advanced stage of development, as in lapwings and chickens, they begin very early to fend for themselves, and the feeding problem is easy (Fig. 5). But when the young birds are hatched as helpless nestlings, the labour of feeding them is often great. Professor Robert Newstead calculated that a single pair of great tits must be credited with the destruction of between seven and eight thousand caterpillars during the twenty days occupied in rearing their young. In the majority of cases the male bird does more than his share, and it is an interesting fact that some males, *e.g.*, snipe, which absent themselves during the brooding period, return to duty when the young ones are hatched. What a quaint picture some of the Antarctic explorers have given us of the penguins toiling up the steep ice-cliff with their crops heavily laden with small shrimp-like crustaceans which they have collected for their offspring—sometimes so heavily laden that they lose it all in the course of their climb.

The Story of the Hornbill.

There are many different kinds of hornbill with different domestic habits, but the story is often as follows. At the breeding time the female bird, by no means in her usual form, finds a nesting-place in a hollow tree (Fig. 6). Her mate closes up the entrance with clay and resinous stuff and other materials—often a very queer mixture—to which he adds the slimy juice of his salivary glands. Thus he narrows the doorway so that no obtrusive monkey can put in his paw, and so that his imprisoned wife can shut the door with her bill when she pleases. On the male bird there then devolves the duty of collecting food for the female, and, by and by, for the single offspring as well. He collects fruits and seeds and insects, and the varied meal is served through the doorway in sausage-like packets, for the stuff is



6.—The Hornbill visiting his imprisoned mate in a hole in a tree.



7.—Woodpeckers and their young.
(By permission of the Directors of the Natural History Museum.)

bound together by a secretion from the male hornbill's crop. The female becomes very plump, the male gets thinner and thinner. It is such hard work that if the weather be bad he sometimes dies of over-exertion.

Pigeon's Milk.

Some people think pigeon's milk is a natural history joke, but it is a convenient name for the creamy material which both male and female pigeons give to their very young squabs. Its particular virtue is that it is very readily digested; it serves like mammal's milk, for the education, so to speak, of the food-canal. But what is pigeon's milk? It is often described as a secretion of the walls of the crop, but that is not quite accurate. It is produced by a fatty degeneration and internal moulting of the cells lining the crop. A familiar sight it is to see both parents giving this curious food to their young.

The Young Storm-Petrel's Meal.

A curious case is that of the storm-petrel, the well-known bird of the open sea, that only comes to land to breed. The single egg is laid in a hole among the rocks, or perhaps in the disused burrow of a rabbit, and the parent bird sits close. When the young one is hatched out the parents seem to leave it all the day long, for they are nervous of the land. They return to it at nightfall, however, and give it a heavy meal of oil from their crop—apparently the residue of many little crustaceans and other small fry of the open sea.

8.—An interesting model showing how the Hoopoe makes its nest.
(By permission of the Directors of the Natural History Museum.)

Fitnesses of Nestlings.

There are some interesting adaptations on the part of nestlings that make feeding easier. In many cases, especially when the parent-birds have to go to and fro hundreds of times in a day with tiny mouthfuls of

insects, it is very important that the moment of feeding should be as brief as possible. So the nestling opens its mouth, not voluntarily, but reflexly (as we draw back our finger from something very hot), when its bill is touched with the food its parent brings; and it is highly probable, as Mr. W. P. Pycraft suggests, that the occasionally bright colour of the nestling's mouth may facilitate the precision of the parent's touch, especially in dim light. Fumbling is out of the question. There is no end to the subtlety of parental-care adaptations. How fit it is that young woodpeckers (Fig. 7), hatched out in a deep hole in a tree, should have their juvenile claws and muscles well suited for clambering up to the entrance, thus to receive with the least possible loss of time what their parents bring. How admirable, on the other side, the fact that certain birds of prey, hunted off their nest, will drop carrion on their young ones. It is almost too good to be true.

Sanitary Measures.

Besides keeping the nestlings hidden, warm, and well-fed, the parent-birds have a more commonplace task which only a few neglect—keeping the nest clean. They often remove the voided matter in their bills, an operation made easier by a thin pellicle of mucus, which forms a sort of delicate bag. They may even hold the young ones in such a position over the edge of the nest that all fouling is avoided. Nature is all for health! There are, of course, some repulsive nests, like that of the beautiful hoopoe (Fig. 8), smelling of ordure, rancid butter, ammonia, and musk; surely deliberate, in any case an exception that proves the rule. One knows, of course, that the scrupulousness with which most birds remove all trace of foulness from the nest, and sometimes from the vicinity of the nest, is an instinctive piece of behaviour established in the course of time not merely in relation to health, but to conceal the whereabouts of the family.

9.—The Great Crested Grebe gets her youngsters on her back and dives, thus forcing them to become at home in the water.

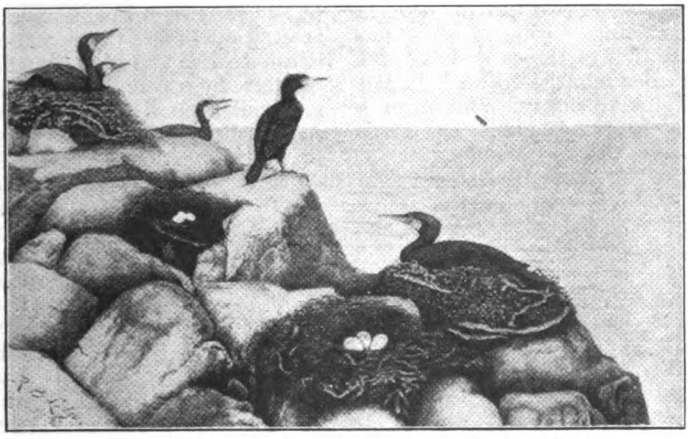
Educating the Young.

It has been proved for chicks, and less fully for some other young birds, that they are not rich in inborn or instinctive capacities—not rich as compared with ants and bees. Thus the newly-hatched chick, undoubtedly thirsty and quite willing to swallow drops of water brought to its bill, will walk through a saucer of water without becoming aware of its significance. But Professor Lloyd Morgan's experiments show that if the chick happens to pick its toes when it is standing in the unrecognized or unrealized water, it suddenly becomes aware, and drinks, raising its bill to the sky. But the point is that it has no instinctive recognition of water as such, nor even of the meaning of its mother's "cluck" if it has been hatched out in a mechanical "foster-mother." What it lacks in the way of inborn instinctive endowment, as compared with an ant or a bee, it makes up for by its extraordinary power of rapid "learning." It has marvellous educability. Hence the importance of the instruction which many parent-birds give their young.

The solicitous hen teaching her chickens to scratch and peck, teaching them also what certain calls mean, is a familiar illustration of what often happens. Sometimes, it is true, the young bird requires no instruction in regard to certain parental calls, but obeys them *instinctively*, without knowing why. Thus the young redshank squats at a particular signal from its parent, and remains motionless until another call breaks the instinctive spell.

Young birds serve an apprenticeship in the art of life, but there is often direct parental teaching as well. Thus the parent guillemots and razorbills encourage their offspring by example and precept to take the first plunge from the cliff into the sea. Sometimes one sees signs of coercion. Peregrine

falcons and some other birds of prey appear to give their young ones lessons in the subtleties of flying and in the tactics of the chase. The great crested grebe gets her youngsters on her back and dives, thus forcing them to become at home in the water (Fig. 9). When ducklings are ready to leave the nest the mother anoints them copiously with the oily secretion of her preen-gland, so that they are not wetted when they take to swimming.



10.—Cormorants' nests on the shelf of a cliff.

Defence of the Young.

Few birds have much chance when the nest is directly attacked, unless indeed they can enlist the help of their neighbours to drive off an intruder, as cliff-swallows a hawk. There are cases, however, where a vigorous defence of the nest is attempted. Thus the cormorant (Fig. 10), nesting on the shelf of the sea-cliff, resents an intruder's approach, hissing violently, and lunging with its formidable beak. Some of the birds of prey strike at men, and a swan puts up a strong defence. Black-headed gulls and lapwings fly close to one's face if one draws too near the nest, and the eider-duck has a very unpleasant way of expressing her resentment at being disturbed.

When defence of the nest is quite out of the question because of its position—on the ground, let us say, or because of the nature of the bird—recourse is sometimes had to wiles. The redshank is extraordinarily successful in leading one astray—one would be provoked if it were not admirable—and the devices of the lapwing are familiar. Very remarkable is what looks like feigning lameness or a broken wing. If it is not a trick, it is almost uncannily like one.

In rare cases the parent-bird has been known to shift its eggs, the goatsucker taking them in its capacious mouth. A transport of nestlings to a place of safety has been occasionally recorded, as in the eagle-owl, and it is not very uncommon in the woodcock (Fig. 11). How the woodcock carries its young ones has been much discussed; it is probably correct to say that they are pressed between the thighs, and that the long bill may also be used to steady them.

The Behaviour of Mound-Birds.

Although a bird may skip brooding altogether, it is not necessarily without parental care. Take the case of the mound-birds or megapods of the Far East—called megapods (big-footed) because of their heavily built legs, which are capable of very vigorous digging. One of these birds, the maleo of Celebes, often makes its nest in the dry volcanic sand near the shore. A pair of them dig a hole about a yard deep and a yard in diameter, and in this the mother-bird lays an egg and covers it with sand. They then return to the forest. At intervals extending over a considerable time, they come back to the shore, and the hen lays egg after egg till there are eight or more. Then the hole is filled up and the precious pair retire for good to the forest, and trouble no more about the matter. There is perhaps no food for them near at hand, and in any case there is no need for them to stay. The warmth of the sun-baked dry sand is sufficient to allow the embryo to develop, and the sand is loose enough to let air in to the eggs. It must be an awkward place to be born in, beneath the ground, but the young mound-bird manages to struggle out safely. Some young mound-birds are probably unique among birds, in being able to fly on the day of their birth, but we believe the young maleo is only able to run. In any case, running or flying, the newly-hatched maleo makes for the shade as quickly as possible. We wonder what the parents say to their children when they meet them? There must be some need for introductions.

The Thermometer Bird.

This curious name is given to a South Australian mound-bird (*Lipoa ocellata*), whose behaviour makes a good climax to our story. The birds choose a clearing in the low bush, where there is loose sandy soil, and the clearing must be open to the sun (to the north or east), and it is usually protected from the prevailing wind by bushes. The

two birds take time by the forelock, and begin operations long before the breeding season. First of all they dig a circular pit about a foot deep, piling up the scratched-out earth in an outer rampart. In the circular pit they make a heap of withered leaves and other parts of plants, the collecting of which means heavy work and terrific scratching. The heap may be two feet or more in height. The next step is to suspend operations. The collection of leaves and twigs is left for four or five months to soak in the rain, and it begins to decay. But after a while the third chapter begins. The birds make a firm nest or egg-chamber in the centre of the compost-heap. It has walls of interlaced twigs and fibres, and a floor of mixed sand and plant-remains, what might almost be called vegetable mould. Over this a mound of leaves and twigs is piled up till it stands about a yard high and has a diameter of perhaps four yards. Sand is thrown all over it, the whole business involving hard work and much time. The fourth chapter begins six to nine days after the completion of the mound. The builders return to the scene of their labours and open the mound carefully, making a gallery near the top, so that the nest is reached. In the nest the hen lays an egg, fixing it upright, broad end up, in the mould, and staying it with twigs. Then the mound is made tidy and off they go. Every three or four days about nine o'clock in the morning they turn up at the mound and open it again to get at the nest, in which the hen places another egg. At length there are about fourteen eggs, in three tiers, four or five in each tier, all in the same position, and all securely fixed. If the arrangement is disturbed, the mother-bird puts it right again. She is very punctilious. The mound is closed up, of course, after each egg-laying, and it is finally left more or less alone, though the birds keep an eye on it all the time. The heat of the sun promotes fermentation among the leaves, and the temperature rises to over ninety degrees Fahrenheit. If the weather is very wet (the eggs are laid in the rainy season) some thatching material is put on the top of the mound. If the weather is very warm the temperature of the mound is apt to rise too high, but the birds attend to this by opening up and loosening the material around the egg-chamber. To this extraordinary carefulness they owe the name "Thermometer Bird." They are also careful to secure good ventilation, for the embryos would die if there were not plenty of air in the egg-chamber. Indeed, they do die of suffocation if some accident befalls their parents and the hill becomes sodden.

11.—How the Woodcock carries its young ones.

(By permission of the Badminton Library.)

The young birds have a prolonged development of about forty-five days within the egg, and they are very vigorous when they are hatched. They wrestle upwards out of the egg-chamber and out of the mound, and make for the bush with all haste. After a while they get off the ground on to the trees, which must be a great relief. This is only a glimpse of an extraordinary story, but we have told enough to prove that a bird which does not brood may nevertheless show a wonderful subtlety of parental care. Looking backwards over our story, and thinking of the nest-making and the brooding, the feeding, the education, and the defence of the young, and remembering that it would take a thousand and one nights to tell the story adequately, must we not admit that the amount of time and energy that birds spend in activities not directly self-preservative, but in the interests of their offspring, is worthy of reasonable admiration?

Mr. Cray's Adventures

by

E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

ILLUSTRATED BY S. ABBEY.

No. IX.

THE RECALCITRANT MR. CRAY

MR. JOSEPH P. CRAY was exceedingly comfortable on board the steamship *Omata*, homeward bound from Toulon to Tilbury. His state-room was very much to his liking, the boat was clean and not overcrowded, the bartender was a human person with an understanding touch upon the cocktail shaker. The people on board, mostly Anglo-Indians holding official positions, were perhaps a little unsociable, and preserved for the most part that reserved demeanour usual amongst travellers who have had the ship to themselves throughout the voyage towards intruders who have embarked at the last port of call. Nevertheless, Mr. Cray, who had been asked to take a vacant place at the captain's table, found no lack of society. There was a compatriot of his own, a manufacturer of reaping machines, who had just paid an extended and profitable visit to the East, and who was always ready to talk business or to recount his doings in some of the more adventurous cities; also a young invalided officer from the Indian Army, with his delicate sister, an interesting but rather pathetic couple, who had seemed grateful for Mr. Cray's cheerful conversation. There was also a middle-aged lady, returning from her travels, who boasted that she had been in every country of the world—a stalwart and determined-looking personage, who usually wore masculine clothes, smoked very strong cigarettes, and who had looked from the first with eyes of distinct favour upon Mr. Cray's pink-and-white opulence. This lady, in fact—Mrs. Richard Green by name—threatened to be the only drawback to an exceedingly pleasant five days. Already Mr. Cray was beginning to take note of her advances with a vague feeling of uneasiness.

"You seem to me, Mr. Cray," she said, dragging her chair over to his side on the evening after his arrival, "to be a man who is in need of sympathy."

Mr. Cray looked at her furtively. She was about his own height and figure; she wore a grey felt hat, perfectly unadorned, jammed down over her head; her tweed skirt barely reached half-way between her knees and her sturdy ankles. Her eyes, perhaps her best feature, were dark and brilliant. Her cheek-bones were a little high, her jaw-bone bespoke determination. She was not a woman to be trifled with.

"Sure!" Mr. Cray assented, weakly. "We all need that. I guess I get on pretty well, though."

"I suppose you think you do," Mrs. Richard Green rejoined, reprovingly. "You men never know when you're well off, and you never know when you're badly off. You're a poor sort of creature anyhow, to go wandering about the world by yourself."

"I'm not always alone," Mr. Cray protested.

"And who is your travelling companion when you are not?" she demanded.

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" Sometimes my wife."

Mrs. Richard Green glared at him ferociously.

" So you are a married man, eh ? "

" I am," Mr. Cray admitted, feeling, for the first time for many years, comfortably resigned to the fact.

" Where's your wife, then ? " his neighbour demanded.

" In Indiana, U.S.A.," Mr. Cray replied. " She prefers to remain there."

Mrs. Green seemed somewhat mollified. Indiana, U.S.A., was a long way off.

" And meanwhile you go gadding about with any hussy who happens to smile at you ? " she asked, sternly.

" I don't know as that's quite fair," Mr. Cray protested. " Young ladies are very pleasant companions sometimes, but——"

" I saw that yellow-headed minx making googly eyes at you at dinner last night," Mrs. Green declared. " Just the sort of baggage you men find attractive, I suppose."

" I don't even know whom you mean," Mr. Cray expostulated.

" Calls herself a colonel's wife ! " Mrs. Richard Green scoffed.

Mr. Cray brought up his reserves.

" What about your husband ? " he inquired.

" Dead," was the uncompromising reply. " I buried him fourteen years ago. Since then I have led a lonely life."

" You must have done some wonderful travelling," Mr. Cray observed.

" I have indeed," she admitted. " I have been into countries where no woman has ever before set foot. I have shown the world what courage can do. Although I have travelled alone and unprotected, no man has ever dared to molest me."

" You must be very brave," Mr. Cray ventured.

" The man who raised his hand against me would be braver still," she asserted.

" I can well believe it," he agreed, fervently.

" At the same time," she continued, after a moment's pause, during which Mr. Cray had been taking notice of her square-toed, masculine shoes, her thick worsted stockings, and massive limbs, the shape of which was imperfectly concealed by the rather tight jersey and loose skirt, " I am free to admit that the time has come when I am a little weary of my travels. I propose to settle down in London, make friends, and lead a domestic life. For the first time for many years I find myself free, and disposed to seek companionship."

" Very agreeable," Mr. Cray murmured.

" I have the name," she continued, edging her chair a little closer to his, " of being a man-hater. I am nothing of the sort."

Mr. Cray expressed his relief.

" We're pretty harmless, take us all round," he ventured.

" You may or may not be," the lady replied. " I have never allowed a man to take any liberties with me. I don't trust them. At the same time," she went on, " a man has his place in a woman's life, and because I have chosen to keep him outside mine for the last fourteen years, that does not necessarily mean that I intend to preserve the same attitude for the rest of my life. The contrary is the case. I intend to cultivate men friends."

" You may marry," Mr. Cray suggested, trying hard to keep his end up.

Mrs. Richard Green looked at him very hard.

" I may," she admitted. " On the other hand, I may not. I am a woman who is free from all prejudices. Travel has broadened my mind. My outlook is different from other women's. Marriage has its advantages and disadvantages. Besides, the person whom I might choose as a companion," she went on, still looking fixedly at Mr. Cray, " might be a married man."

" Sure ! " Mr. Cray assented, a little shaken. " There are many who aren't, though," he went on, with a sudden access of cheerfulness ; " in fact, London's full of them Never knew a place where there were so many middle-aged bachelors."

" When I fix my affections upon a man," Mrs. Green said, firmly, " his state will make no difference to me. Married or single, I shall have him. If the law cannot join us, I shall make my own law. That is the sort of woman I am, Mr. Cray. That is the sort of spirit which has brought me safely through savage countries."

MR. CRAY made frantic signals of distress to the manufacturer of reaping machines, who was just passing. The latter responded like a man.

" We are waiting for you forward, Mr. Cray," he announced. " Number one is in the shaker."

Mr. Cray struggled hastily to extricate himself from the rug which enveloped his lower limbs.

" I'll be with you right along," he declared, staggering to his feet. " You'll excuse me, Mrs. Green."

" And what may this number one signify ? " the lady asked, disapprovingly.

" Our first cocktail before dinner," Mr. Cray explained. " I guess I'm rather a sinner so far as that sort of thing is concerned," he went on, guilefully. " I try to keep myself down to three before dinner, but it's very often five, or even six."

"It is a habit of which you must be broken," Mrs. Green said, sternly.

Mr. Cray staggered off. He passed his arm through his friend's. With the other hand he felt his forehead, half expecting to find drops of perspiration there.

"Gee, but that's some woman, sir!" he declared.

His companion grinned.

"I heard her asking questions about you. She's got your number all right. Said she liked your mild voice and pink-and-white complexion."

"Let's get right into the bar," Mr. Cray insisted nervously, hurrying along.

AT dinner-time that evening Mr. Cray received a further shock. In the chair exactly opposite his own, which had been vacant since Toulon, he discovered Mrs. Richard Green.

"I have changed my place," she announced, graciously. "I thought I should like to come to your table."

"'I guess I'm rather a sinner in so far as cocktails are concerned,' Mr. Cray went on."

The captain, seated a few places away, smiled. The young invalid officer exchanged a glance of amusement with his sister. The manufacturer of reaping machines, who was at a table some distance away, rose and telegraphed his congratulations across the room. Mr. Cray, without knowing exactly why, felt his *savoir faire* deserting him. The fact that he ate his soup in stony silence did not seem in any way to trouble his opposite neighbour. She eyed with calm and proprietary approbation his well-fitting, and carefully-brushed dinner suit, his very handsome pearls, and well-tied bow. She herself was appearing in very different guise. Her skirt was still of the order called serviceable, but she wore a blouse of a shimmery magenta colour, long amber earrings, and a necklace of uncut stones of barbaric character. Her closely-cropped black hair defied any attempt at ornamentation, but in the front it showed signs of straying over her massive forehead in the form of a fringe. Mr. Cray, notwithstanding his qualms, could scarcely keep his eyes off her. The muscular development of her arms was wonderful. She ate her dinner with the calm and healthy appetite of a woman sure of herself and her path in life. The captain made a polite effort to engage her in conversation.

"They tell me, madam," he said, "that you have been a great traveller."

"I have visited every country in the globe," she replied. "I have faced savages, wild animals, and Government House dinner-parties. I am now on my way home to settle down."

She looked hard at Mr. Cray, who writhed in his seat.

"You will be writing another book of travels, I suppose?" the captain remarked.

"In due course," Mrs. Green assented. "I shall first seek for an honest publisher. The sales of my last volume were most disappointing."

THE captain, who felt that he had done his duty, turned to another of his neighbours. The young officer addressed Mr. Cray.

"You are just from the Riviera, sir, are you not?" he inquired.

"From Monte Carlo," Mr. Cray told him.

Mrs. Green frowned slightly.

"I look upon the Riviera," she declared, "as a place for idle people to indulge their extravagant habits. A most enervating climate, too."

Mr. Cray remembered that he was a man, and a citizen of the United States.

"I would sooner spend the winter in Monte Carlo than anywhere else in the world," he said, firmly.

Mrs. Green showed no signs of annoyance. Her smile, indeed, was maddeningly tolerant.

"Well," she remarked, "under certain conditions I dare say I should be inclined to modify my impressions of the place. I have no conscientious objections to a little mild gambling. I occasionally indulge in a game of cards myself. But extravagance is a vice to which I have the strongest objection."

"Extravagance," Mr. Cray pronounced, "is what you might term a relative quality. In my younger days I worked hard and established a successful business. I have only one daughter and no other near relatives. It gives me pleasure to spend my money."

"A very bad example to others," Mrs. Green said, severely.

"Guess the others can take care of themselves," Mr. Cray observed. "I was never meant to be a shining light."

"What you need," Mrs. Green began, portentously——

"Is another pint of that champagne, James," Mr. Cray interrupted, valiantly, turning to the steward. "Madam," he added, looking across the table, "I confess that I am a black sheep. I have every bad habit under the sun—and I like my bad habits."

Mrs. Green was sorrowful but unperturbed.

"You are a very interesting man," she declared, toying with her huge beads and smiling across the table. "I am seriously thinking of taking you in hand."

Mr. Cray's heart sank within him. The woman was like a Colossus. Nothing could move her. He had the sensations of a man pursued by some irresistible force. Mrs. Green lifted her voice, and laid down beneficent but somewhat arbitrary laws as to how a man should live. Mr. Cray listened in rebellious silence.

"Your great country, Mr. Cray," she wound up, "has shown the world what it thinks of liquor."

"In her way she has," Mr. Cray acknowledged. "In my small way, I shall continue to show the world what I think of it. Steward, hurry up with that wine."

Mrs. Green shook her head, but her smile was indulgent. She had the air of a mother watching the antics of a refractory but fascinating child.

"Obstinate!" she murmured. "We will have a little talk after dinner, Mr. Cray. I will make you a little coffee up on deck."

"I never drink coffee," her victim lied. "I always take brandy after my meals."

"In time," Mrs. Green warned him, "the indulgence in spirits to that extent will completely destroy the lining of your stomach."

"Mine," Mr. Cray assured her, recklessly, "is lined with asbestos."

"You remind me," she said, pensively, "of a black man on the West Coast of Africa, whom I treated with medicine of my own concoction. His sufferings were terrible."

"I can well believe it," Mr. Cray assented, fervently.

"Nevertheless, I cured him," she continued, with a note of triumph in her tone. "He died soon afterwards of another complaint. Curiously enough, his savage relatives were so incensed against me that I had to leave the neighbourhood before I had concluded the notes of my visit."

Mr. Cray gulped down his wine, bowed to the captain, and stood up.

"Guess it's a bit close down here," he muttered. "I'll take a turn on deck, and a cigar."

"It is the excessive quantity of wine you have drunk compared with the small quantity of food you have eaten," Mrs. Green declared. "No wonder you are giddy! Would you like me to accompany you?"

"By no means," Mr. Cray replied, emphatically, as he made his hurried exit.

MR. CRAY was, without doubt, in some respects a weak man. He had conceived a positive dislike for Mrs. Richard Green, and he had abandoned a certain portion of his dinner sooner than be tormented any longer by her conversation. Yet when, a quarter of an hour later, by a strategic flank movement, she ran him to earth in a retired portion of the ship, he was utterly unable to say those few rude but firm words which he had been repeating to himself ever since his escape.

"I have set the coffee machine going," she announced, "and the steward is bringing us some cups. I am making it a little stronger than usual on your account. If you feel in the least unsteady, let me take your arm."

"I am quite all right, thank you," Mr. Cray assured her. "You'll excuse me if I seem ungracious, but coffee always keeps me awake."

"Mine won't," was the firm reply. "If you stay awake to-night it will be because of the wine you've drunk, or because you've something on your conscience. Mind that coil of rope."

Mr. Cray was on the point of surrender when a saviour appeared. The invalided young officer emerged from the smoke-room and touched him on the arm.

"We are waiting for you, Mr. Cray," he announced. "You haven't forgotten our little game of poker?"

Mr. Cray's wit was as ready as his sense of relief was great. He felt Mrs. Green's hand go out towards him, and he broke away.

"For the moment I had forgotten it," he confessed. "I must ask you to excuse me, ma'am. I have promised to play poker with these boys."

"You can play afterwards," she objected.

"They're delicate young men," Mr. Cray explained; "all go to bed early. You'll excuse me."

Mr. Cray dived into the smoking-room and Mrs. Green went on towards where her coffee-machine was simmering upon the deck.

"You're a good Samaritan," the former declared. "I don't know what's got that woman, but she's a holy terror. . . . Why, you've got a little game of poker," he went on, in a tone of surprise, as he noticed three other young men seated at a table in a corner of the room, counting out chips.

His companion assented.

"It's a very small game," he explained, as he led the way. "My name is Esholt—Captain Esholt—just invalided out and going home to look for a job. My three friends are Mr. Graham, Captain Thomson, and Mr. Leach."

The three shook hands with Mr. Cray, who sat down genially amongst them and gave lavish orders to the expectant steward. They were all very much of the same type as Esholt himself. One of them had been in the Indian Army with Esholt, and the other two, after a period of service, one in Mesopotamia and the other in Egypt, had recently been demobilized.

"We play quite a small game," Captain Esholt repeated, a little nervously. "The fact of it is, we are all of us pretty hard up. We ante two shillings, if you don't mind."

"Quite enough," Mr. Cray agreed. "I like a small game. I'll take five pounds' worth of chips. What's the limit, anyway?"

"Well, we've never made one," the other replied. "We just double, and we don't get very far on that. Straddle when you like, and jack-pots for full hands or better."

"Let her go," Mr. Cray declared, lighting a fresh cigar. "Just the sort of game I like."

The game proceeded for some time with varying fortunes. Mr. Cray, aware of a certain tenseness on the part of his companions, which seemed to him inexplicable in view of the smallness of the stakes, played with an indifference which resulted, as is usually the case, in his steadily winning. During one of those brief periods when he was out of the game he leaned back and took stock of his fellow-players, curiously at first, and then sympathetically. They were all apparently under thirty, they were all either slightly maimed or with partially broken health. Esholt had already confided to him his fears as to securing a berth with his old company, and neither of the others seemed much more sanguine as to his chances of making a fresh start in life. Mr. Cray looked

down at his chips and wondered how to get rid of them. Presently he found out.

Esholt was the dealer, Thomson was next to him, and Mr. Cray next. Mr. Cray straddled Thomson's ante, and these two and the dealer alone remained in. Thomson took one card, Mr. Cray kept an ace and drew four. Esholt bet, Thomson doubled. Mr. Cray, picking up his cards, found that amongst the four he had drawn were another three aces. He doubled again, and Esholt went out. Thomson hesitated. The amount now in front of him was sixteen shillings, and it required another sixteen to see Mr. Cray's bet.

"I'd go quietly, young man, if I were you," the latter warned him. "I've the biggest hand we've seen to-night."

There was a spot of colour in Thomson's pale cheeks. He looked at Mr. Cray with a queer little twitch of the lips.

"I don't want to know about your hand," he said, roughly. "How do I know you're not bluffing? Anyway, I'm seeing your thirty-two and raising it the limit."

"Sixty-four to see, eh?" Mr. Cray remarked. "Well, make it a hundred and twenty-eight."

"Two hundred and fifty-six," was the prompt rejoinder.

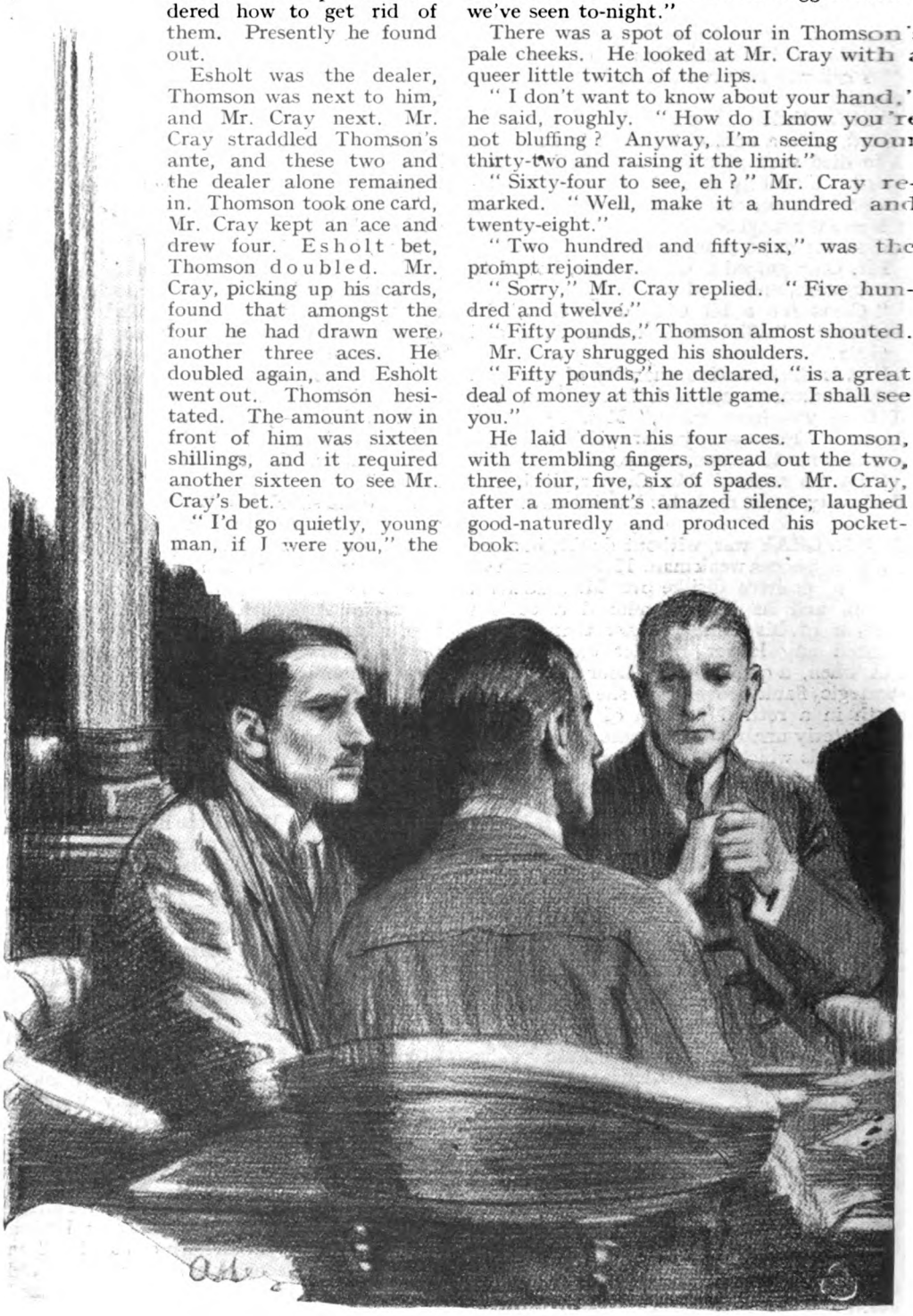
"Sorry," Mr. Cray replied. "Five hundred and twelve."

"Fifty pounds," Thomson almost shouted.

Mr. Cray shrugged his shoulders.

"Fifty pounds," he declared, "is a great deal of money at this little game. I shall see you."

He laid down his four aces. Thomson, with trembling fingers, spread out the two, three, four, five, six of spades. Mr. Cray, after a moment's amazed silence, laughed good-naturedly and produced his pocket-book.



"'If you boys will excuse me,' said Mr. Cray, 'I'll just take

" I congratulate you, young man," he said. " You were in luck to find me with such a big hand."

He paid out the notes and ordered drinks. The game proceeded. For three or four rounds nothing particular occurred. Then, when again it was Esholt's deal, and the first of a round of jack-pots, Mr. Cray found himself with a pair of kings.

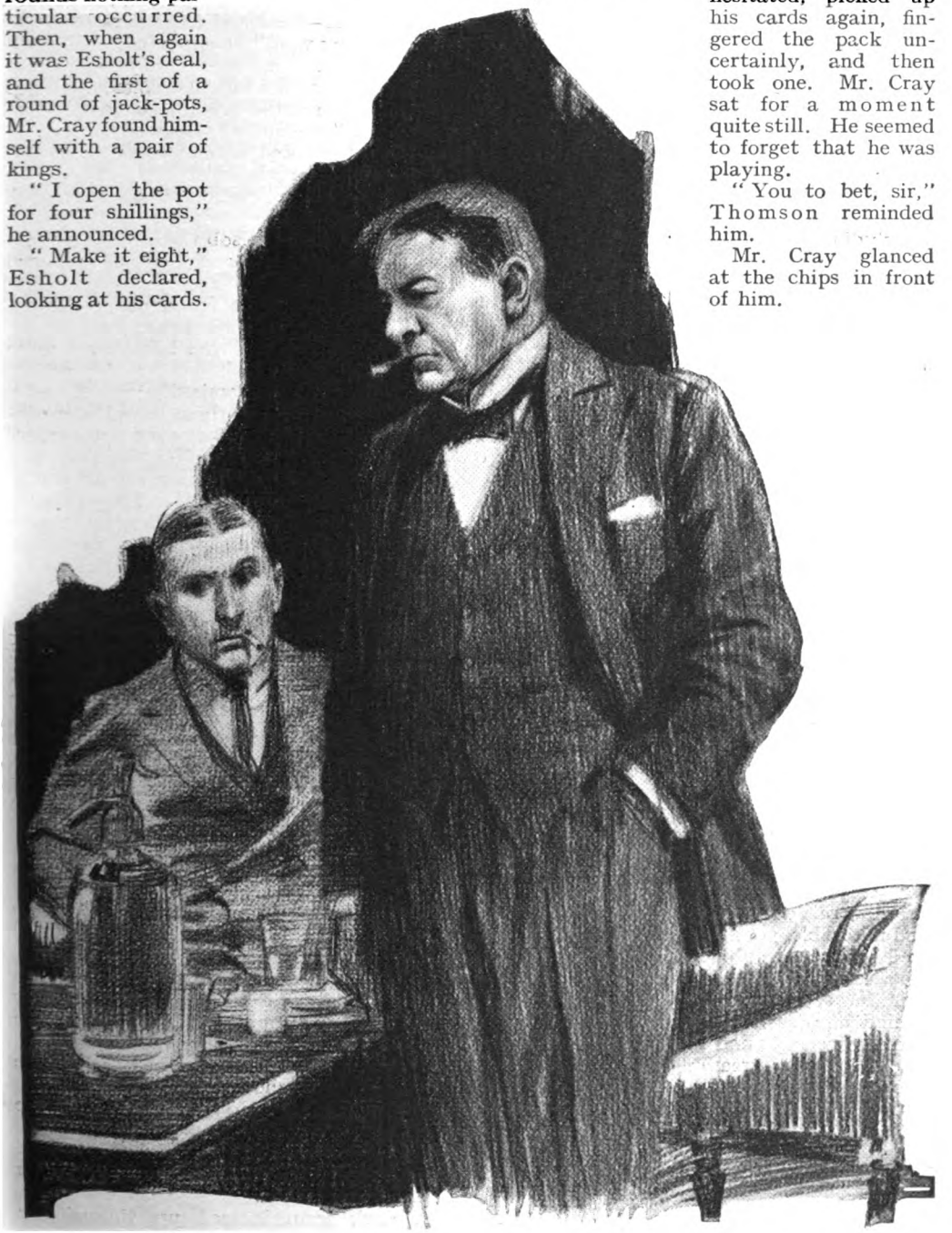
" I open the pot for four shillings," he announced.

" Make it eight," Esholt declared, looking at his cards.

Every one came in. Thomson took three cards, glanced at them and threw in his hand. Mr. Cray took three, and found himself with another king and a pair of aces. Graham on his left, took three ; Leach one ; Esholt hesitated, picked up his cards again, fingered the pack uncertainly, and then took one. Mr. Cray sat for a moment quite still. He seemed to forget that he was playing.

" You to bet, sir," Thomson reminded him.

Mr. Cray glanced at the chips in front of him.



a turn on deck. The atmosphere in here is a trifle thick.' "

"Twenty-four shillings," he said, mechanically.

"Forty-eight," from Graham.

"Ninety-six," from Leach.

"A hundred and ninety-two," Esholt declared, glancing at his cards and laying them down again.

"I'm away," Thomson grumbled. "Just my luck with a big pool."

Mr. Cray sat quite still for another few moments. Again he seemed to be suffering from a sort of mental paralysis. He roused himself with an effort.

"Three hundred and eighty-four," he said at last.

Graham hesitated and threw in reluctantly. Leach did the same.

"Double!" Esholt declared.

They all looked at Mr. Cray. He was steadily watching Esholt.

"Twice three hundred and eighty-four is a great deal of money," he said. "However, I must see you, Captain Esholt."

He laid down upon the table his "full house." Esholt turned over his cards one by one. He was deathly pale.

"I have your four aces, sir," he announced. "I kept three and a kicker."

Mr. Cray looked at the cards for a moment and nodded slowly.

"Twice three hundred and eighty-four are seven hundred and sixty-eight," he calculated; "that is thirty-eight pounds eight shillings."

He counted out forty pounds from his pocket-book, received the change, and replaced the book in his pocket. Then he rose to his feet.

"If you boys will excuse me," he said, "I guess I'll just take a turn on deck. The atmosphere in here is a trifle thick. I'll be with you again presently. You can leave me out for a deal or two."

AMIDST a nervous and portentous silence Mr. Cray left the room. He walked slowly along the deck, heedless of the drizzling rain and the wind. He was depressed and miserable, yet at that moment it seemed to him that only one course was possible. He was within a few yards of the door of the captain's room when he heard light footsteps behind him and felt his arm grabbed. He turned around to find Blanche Esholt by his side, her hair streaming in the wind, her lips parted, her eyes filled with half-terrified curiosity.

"Have you finished playing, Mr. Cray?" she asked.

"For the present," he answered, lifelessly.

"Where are you going now?"

"I was just stepping in to say 'good evening' to the captain."

Her fingers were still gripping his arm. She drew him to the rail of the ship. Mr Cray found himself welcoming these few moments' respite.

"Tell me about the game," she begged.

"I would rather not," he replied.

"Did they win?" she faltered. "Those boys, I mean—Dick and the others?"

"Yes, they won," he admitted.

"Much?"

"Getting on for a hundred pounds. I was just going to see the captain about it."

"Why?" she almost screamed.

Mr. Cray glanced around to be sure that they were not overheard.

"Because they cheated," he answered, gravely.

She commenced to sob then. She was incoherent, but somehow or other she managed to tell her story.

"I knew they'd be found out," she declared. "It was the stupidest, most idiotic thing. Mr. Cray, will you believe me when I tell you something?"

"I guess so," he promised.

"There isn't one of those boys," she continued, passionately, "has ever before done a dishonourable action. Jack Graham, Sidney Leach, and Phil Thomson are all just in the same boat as Dick and I. They gave up their work for the war, and they can't pick it up again. Not one of them has been able to find a reasonable job since. Dick and I haven't got fifty pounds between us, and not a soul in England to look to, and the others are in the same box. They were talking it over the other night, and Phil Thomson said suddenly that he was tired of being honest, he meant to get the money to live on, somehow or other. Then the others joined in, and Dick explained how easy it was to cheat at cards. And then someone said you were a millionaire, and they've been practising this poker game in their state-rooms every minute of the day since."

Somehow, Mr. Cray's heart began to grow lighter. He patted the girl on the back, then he began to laugh.

"Miss Esholt," he said, "I believe every word of what you have said. I never in all my life—and I've had some experience—saw such a darned poor, bungling attempt at cheating! Why, your brother don't know enough about palming cards to deceive the kids at a children's party, and that other young man, Thomson—why, he trembled like a baby when he showed his hands."

"You won't go to the captain?" she begged, piteously.

"I will not," he promised; "that is, if my talk with the young men themselves is satisfactory." . . .

A dark form loomed up through the shadows. A hand fell upon Mr. Cray's shoulder.

" I heard you were on deck looking for me, Mr. Cray," a familiar voice observed. " I just went down for a moment to put on my goloshes."

Mr. Cray was speechless. Blanche Esholt, conscious of her red eyes, stole away, a proceeding which Mrs. Green watched with satisfaction.

" A forward child, that," she said. " Mr. Cray, I am sure you will be glad to know that I have decided to join your game of poker."

" To do what ? " Mr. Cray faltered.

" We will promenade for a moment," she continued, propelling him along. " I feel that you do not altogether understand me, Mr. Cray. I am an independent woman—my life and training have made me so—but I am not averse to harmless recreations. I have played draw poker with the king of a dusky tribe of West Africans and won from him two elephant tusks. I may even say that I am fond of the game. Some day I will teach you poker-patience."

A tremendous idea commenced to dawn upon Mr. Cray. It developed slowly, however.

" You may lose your money, Mrs. Green," he warned her. " These boys play very well."

" On the other hand," she replied, " I may win some. I am not afraid of my skill in any undertaking in which I may engage. At auction bridge I won four hundred rupees in Burma. I was considered by everybody there a wonderful player."

" I guess we'll start to-morrow night," Mr. Cray suggested. " It's a trifle late."

" We will start in ten minutes," Mrs. Green pronounced. " I shall now go down to my state-room and fetch some money. Kindly prepare the young gentlemen for my coming."

Mrs. Green disappeared down the companion-way, and Mr. Cray made his way back to the smoking-room. The four young men, in attitudes of profound dejection, were seated pretty well as he had left them, except that Blanche Esholt was on the settee by her brother's side. Added to the pile of chips which Mr. Cray had left was the little roll of notes with which he had parted. Esholt rose to his feet as Mr. Cray approached.

" We couldn't have gone through with it, sir," he confessed, " even if you hadn't found us out. There's your money. I can only say that we are sorry. We are entirely at your mercy."

Mr. Cray stood by his chair. The steward had gone into the inner bar. It chanced that there was no one else in the room.

" Will you give me your word of honour, all of you," he said, " never to attempt this sort of thing again ? "

The reply was unanimous and convincing. Mr. Cray resumed his seat.

" Boys," he proposed, " I guess we'd better call these chips in and start the game again. Mrs. Richard Green is coming to join us. Don't look so astonished, all of you. Give me the chips. I'm banker for the rest of this trip. Do your best to win, and we'll settle up on the last evening, and whatever you see that you don't understand—well, just put it, so to speak, in your forgettery. . . . To pass the time until the lady arrives, I will now show you a few card tricks. I guess, when I've finished, you'll think it wise to forget the little you know about dealing aces."

Mr. Cray kept his word, and when Mrs. Green, carrying a large reticule and wearing a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, entered the room with an air of determination and a smile meant to be ingratiating, he had reduced his little circle of watchers to a state of amazed stupefaction. He gathered up the cards at the lady's entrance.

" If you'll take this seat opposite to me, ma'am," he invited, " we'll make a start. I'm banker, and, if agreeable, I'll keep an account against you all till the end of the trip."

Mrs. Green took the seat indicated, hung her reticule across the back of her chair, settled her spectacles firmly upon her nose, and counted the chips handed out to her with the utmost care.

" The idea is excellent," she said. " Let the game proceed."

IT was the last evening of the voyage—the great steamship was, indeed, being slowly convoyed up the Thames in charge of a pilot. Mr. Cray and his young friends were seated in the corner of the smoking-room which they had occupied every evening. They were awaiting the arrival of Mrs. Green.

" Has anyone seen the dear lady to-day ? " Esholt asked.

" She came in to lunch an hour late, and had dinner in her state-room," Mr. Cray announced, with a grin. " I passed her on deck this morning, but she seems to have become a trifle short-sighted."

There was a little ripple of suppressed laughter.

" I notice that she's changed her place at table, too," Thomson remarked.

Mr. Cray smiled beatifically.

" She gave the deck steward a shilling to put our chairs at the opposite end of the deck yesterday morning," he confided.

" Poor Mr. Cray ! " Blanche Esholt murmured.

The door was opened with a firm hand, and deliberately closed again. Mrs. Richard Green approached the table. Determination was engraven in every line of her forcible countenance. Gone were the magenta blouse,

the barbaric beads, with those other slight concessions to her sex designed to allure the recalcitrant Mr. Cray. She was dressed in the severe garb in which she proposed to land on the following morning—a plain suit of iron grey, covering without flattery her massive limbs; a hard felt hat, and square-toed shoes. She had the air of one confronted with an unpleasant duty, to the performance of which she was braced only from a high sense of principle and ethical resolve.

"Will you sit here, Mrs. Green?" Mr. Cray invited, rising and pointing to one of the swivel chairs.

"I will not sit down," was the uncompromising reply. "I came here to say a few words, and I speak better standing."

Mr. Cray glanced at a list of figures which he held in his hand.

"Eighty-four pounds seventeen, ma'am, you seem to owe," he announced, with a slightly injured air. "The others have all paid up."

"I, on the contrary," Mrs. Green declared, "shall not pay."

MR. CRAY'S benevolent face assumed a remarkable change of expression. He looked at the speaker in pained surprise.

"Madam," he protested, "this is a debt of honour."

"A debt of dishonour I call it," was the spirited retort. "I have consulted authorities upon the subject. I find that poker is an illegal game. I am surprised at you, sir," she went on, directly addressing Mr. Cray, "a man of your age and with your experience of life, taking advantage of these young people here and stripping them ruthlessly of their—their pocket-money."

"We don't complain," Esholt intervened, with the air of a martyr.

"It was a fair game," Thomson sighed.

"I've paid my bit, anyhow," Leach murmured.

"The more fool you!" Mrs. Green declared, standing squarely upon her feet. "What the law of libel may be on board ship I don't know, and I don't care, but this much I'm here to say and I'll say it, and you can any of you treat the matter in any way you think fit. The whole of my money was lost whenever Mr. Cray dealt."

"Do you insinuate, madam——?" Mr. Cray began.

"Shut up!" the lady interrupted. "You can speak when I've finished. That is the bald fact. Every time you dealt I had a good hand and you had a better. You may be what you seem. I don't know. You handle the cards too slickly for my liking, and if you want to know my opinion of you, you can have it."

"My dear Mrs. Green!" Mr. Cray faltered.

"Don't 'my dear' me!" that lady thundered, striking the table with her fist. "I've formed my opinion of you, Mr. Cray. I believe you to be a professional gambler, and not one penny of my money do I part with."

A SUDDEN wave of emotion seemed to pass over the little company. Blanche Esholt's face was hidden in her handkerchief, Thomson's was buried in his arms. Mr. Cray himself was pained and humiliated.

"That is my decision," Mrs. Green proclaimed, her tone gaining vigour and her manner becoming more triumphant as she noted the effect of her words. "Not one penny of my money shall I part with, and if I were you young people I would go to the captain and force this person to disgorge. That is all I have to say. Except this," she concluded, turning to Mr. Cray. "Take my advice and turn over a new leaf. It is all very well to plunder children, but there are other men and women about with brains besides myself. Some day or other you will be in trouble, and if ever a witness is needed to testify against you, they can call upon Mrs. Richard Green!"

She made a dignified and triumphant exit, but it was some minutes before Mr. Cray, wiping the tears from his eyes, could obtain a hearing. Even the pale-faced little girl by his side was weak with laughter.

"Now I've just a word to say to you young people," he began, seriously. "I want you to understand that though I'm a professional gambler when it suits me, I am also what Mrs. Green believed me to be when I came on board—a pretty wealthy man. I like you boys, and you've helped me through with this little stunt gamely. Now I'm going to do something for you."

There was a dead silence. Blanche Esholt sat upright on the settee, trembling. She alone had any idea of what was coming.

"I've been making a few inquiries, and this is what I propose," Mr. Cray continued. "We want help badly out at my works in Seattle, and if you, Graham and Thomson, care about taking it on, there are jobs for both of you waiting out there, with your passages paid and an advance on account of your salaries. You, Leach, I understand, were employed by the bank in London with whom I have pretty considerable dealings. You don't want to worry any more about your job there, for I guess you get it and you get it quick—within a day or so of our landing. And as for Esholt here, well, I've been away from London a pretty good spell, and I guess

"What Mrs. Richard Green saw when she looked through the porthole of the smoking-room."

there'll be correspondence and business enough waiting sufficient for a couple of secretaries. So there we all are, and, as I can't see that we've any of us got any particular worry on just now—Steward, before you close the bar, please, a bottle of that number seventy-four."

THIS is what Mrs. Richard Green saw when she looked through the porthole of the smoking-room a short time later, attracted by the sounds of unaccustomed revelry. Mr. Cray was in his usual place, with a glass of champagne in his hand, and Blanche Esholt, her arm tightly drawn through his, was seated by his side, a transformed being, her eyes dancing with joy and gratitude. The four young men, her fellow-victims, were standing up with outstretched glasses, singing at the top of their voices, "For he's a jolly good fellow!" And this notwithstanding her courageous denunciation of a person whose skill in dealing was certainly phenomenal, and whose character she had ruthlessly exposed! No wonder Mrs. Green decided that all young people were fools!

(The concluding Adventure in this series will appear next month).

Sir A. CONAN DOYLE

says: "I think these photographs of Sherlock Holmes quite wonderful."

SHERLOCK HOLMES ON THE FILM

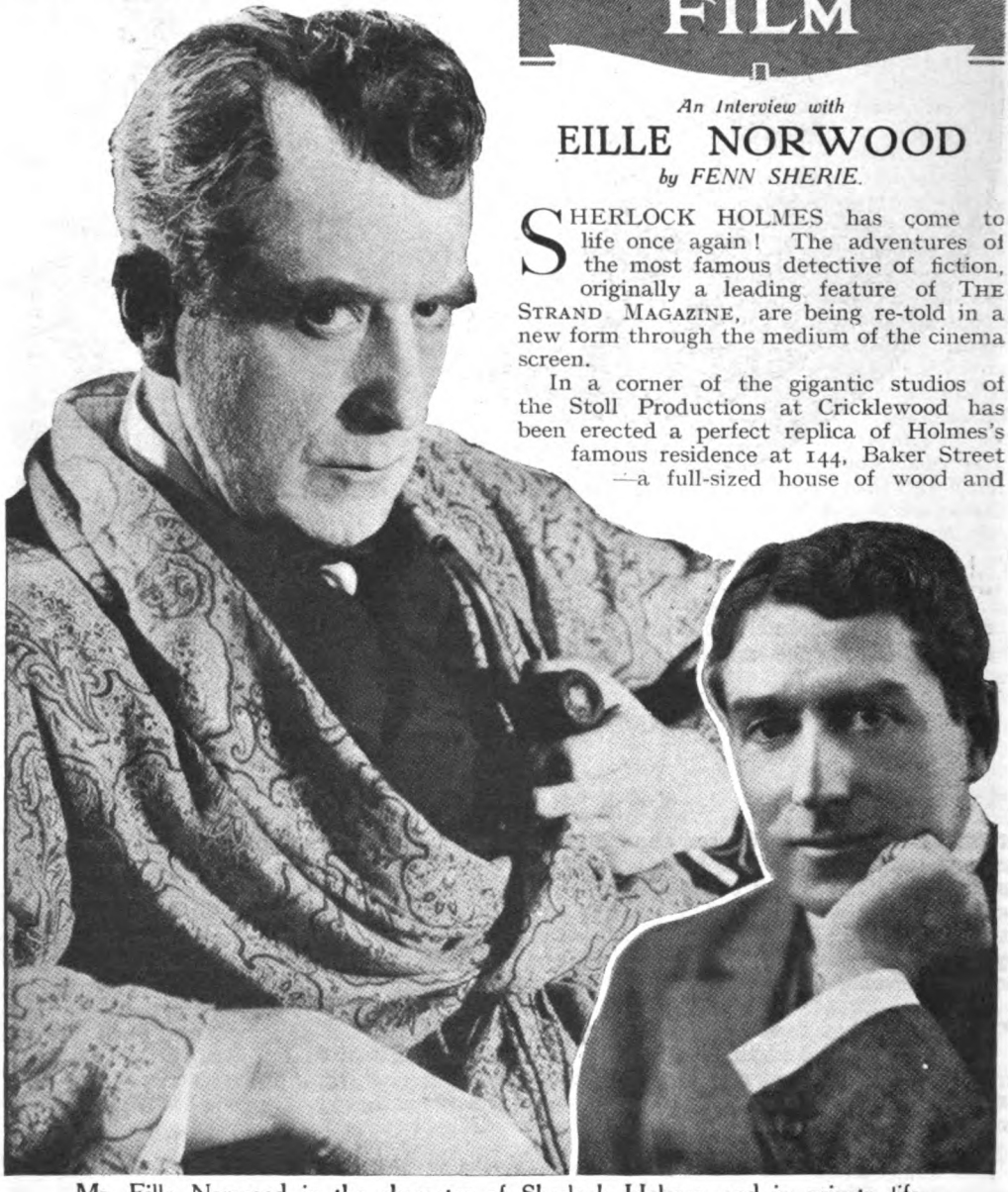
An Interview with

EILLE NORWOOD

by FENN SHERIE.

SHERLOCK HOLMES has come to life once again! The adventures of the most famous detective of fiction, originally a leading feature of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, are being re-told in a new form through the medium of the cinema screen.

In a corner of the gigantic studios of the Stoll Productions at Cricklewood has been erected a perfect replica of Holmes's famous residence at 144, Baker Street—a full-sized house of wood and



Mr. Eille Norwood in the character of Sherlock Holmes, and in private life.

plaster, to all appearances as solid as the original. Here, when "exterior" scenes are being filmed, supers may be seen strolling along the footpath to represent passers-by, whilst all forms of wheeled traffic pass down the "road," motor-cars draw up at the entrance to the house, and, in fact, the entire atmosphere of a London street is so faithfully reproduced that when the picture is thrown on the screen it is impossible to detect that the scene was not taken out of doors. Indeed, the mechanical side of this masterpiece of deception is so complete that the producer can even order rain or sunshine as he requires!

Inside the house, on the first floor, is the detective's study. Relics and curios, musty books, foul-looking pipes, ancient tobacco-jars, chemical apparatus, and other impedimenta are scattered about in a manner typical of the untidy but studious bachelor. Indeed, the "atmosphere" of the apartment is so convincing that when the dazzling arc-lamps are turned off and the noises of the studio workers have ceased, the visitor who wanders into the apartment feels somewhat like a tourist standing upon historical ground—it seems as though Sherlock Holmes himself had actually existed, and that this, his home, had been preserved untouched as a relic of the past.

Since November last the whirring cameras have recorded upon thousands of feet of film no fewer than fifteen separate photo-plays based on the original short stories by Sir A. Conan Doyle, and by the time that this article appears the first of these will have been released to the public.

The outstanding feature of these productions is the wonderful characterization of the *rôle* of Sherlock Holmes by the well-known actor Eille Norwood, than whom no man more eminently suitable for the part could have been chosen.

In the first place, his facial characteristics are such that, with the skilful application of grease-paint and an alteration in the dressing of the hair—which, by the way, necessitates the use of a razor and entails a certain amount of physical pain every time it is brushed backwards—he presents a truly remarkable likeness to the popular conception of the great detective.

Moreover, he is naturally of a calm and contemplative temperament, and his bearing, both on and off the screen, is entirely in keeping with the character of Holmes. Apropos of his stolidity of countenance, the following amusing story, which is told in Mr. Norwood's club, may be of interest.

One evening, during a round of poker, Eille Norwood suddenly doubled the stakes.

"I wonder if he's bluffing," said one of his opponents.

Sherlock Holmes disguised as the newsvendor in "The Tiger of San Pedro." The effect of the hare-lip is obtained by skilful shading with grease-paint, whilst the other features are distorted by mechanical devices invented by the actor himself.

"Impossible to tell," said another. "The beggar's got the face of a sphinx."

"Truly spoken," added the third man. "Every time I go to the British Museum and encounter the mummy of one of the Rameses I always say, 'Halloa, Eille, old chap, how are you?'"

"Well," said the actor, slowly removing the pipe from his mouth, "as a matter of fact I have always felt that I could play faro better than poker."

To return to the subject of the films, however, Eille Norwood's greatest asset in

A taxi-cab driver in "A Scandal in Bohemia." When Mr. Norwood first assumed this impenetrable disguise he came very near to being ejected from the studio as a trespasser!

enacting the *rôle* of the detective is his remarkable skill in the art of disguise—which may be judged from the accompanying illustrations.

In "A Scandal in Bohemia," the first Sherlock Holmes short story ever published, the author made Dr. Watson remark :—

"It was not merely that Holmes changed his costume. His expression, his manner, his very soul seemed to vary with every fresh part that he assumed."

Eulogistic though they may be, those

In this remarkable disguise of the Japanese opium-smoker no grease-paint whatever was employed, the shape of the eyes being altered by a process of strapping.

words which were written in praise of the fictitious Holmes may be applied without reservation to the living character as portrayed by Eille Norwood.

Interviewed in his dressing-room at the studio, Mr. Norwood related some interesting experiences in connection with the various disguises he has adopted for these films, and revealed, for the first time, some of the methods which he has invented to obtain such realistic effects.

"It has given me the greatest pleasure," he said, "to hear that my disguises have won the approval of the brilliant creator of Sherlock Holmes. As an actor of long standing, I have made it my business to study make-up in all its branches, but my advent into the realms of the silent drama opened up an entirely new field of research in the art of disguise, and I had to make a good many experiments before I could take up the *rôle* of Sherlock Holmes with absolute confidence.

"Disguises that are excellent for the theatre are impossible for the screen. The searching eye of the camera finds

A clever impersonation of a tramp from "The Beryl Coronet," in which the droop of the lower lid of the right eye is a noteworthy feature. None of the photographs here reproduced has been in any way re-touched.

The old Nonconformist minister is one of four disguises in "A Scandal in Bohemia." In this Mr. Norwood has been particularly successful in concealing the join of the bald pate.

out and reveals every join, line, and trick of the actor, and so the difficulty of self-effacement is extraordinarily intensified. For example, the man whose hair and he are still attached to each other finds it impossible to wear an artificial bald pate of the usual pattern without showing a line where the wig joins the forehead. Indeed, it is on record that one well-known star, who made up marvellously as a Chinaman on the stage, had to discard the actual wig he wore for the part because the joining line could not be concealed in the necessary 'close-ups,' and, as the only alternative, he actually went to the trouble and inconvenience of shaving his head entirely.

"I am glad to say that, after a deal of experiment, I have succeeded in discovering a means of overcoming this difficulty, and, as you see, the wig which I wore as the Nonconformist minister, admirably constructed to my design by Willie Clarkson, shows no join of any description.

"In the theatre, one has the softening effect of the footlights and distance, two invaluable aids to the actor; in film work one has neither—for the large 'close-ups' bring the screen actor nearer to the observer at the back of the gallery than the artist on the stage to the front row of the stalls. For this reason he cannot fix artificial pads on the cheeks to fatten the face, and some other means must be employed to gain the effect. Again, if a nasal disguise require immediate removal—as is necessary in more than one of the Sherlock Holmes pictures—common or garden nose-paste availeth not!

"Apart from the difficulty of making each disguise so perfect that even the all-seeing eye of the camera will not reveal it, I have also to bear in mind that every character I adopt must be superimposed on the make-up which I use for Sherlock Holmes himself, and, moreover, must be either adjusted or removed in full view of the camera, so that the audience may see that no double has been employed.

"Again, knowing that the disguises are a leading feature of the film stories, cinema audiences will naturally be on the look-out for them—which renders deception far more difficult than it would be in real life, where the detective would mingle, unlooked for, with the crowd.

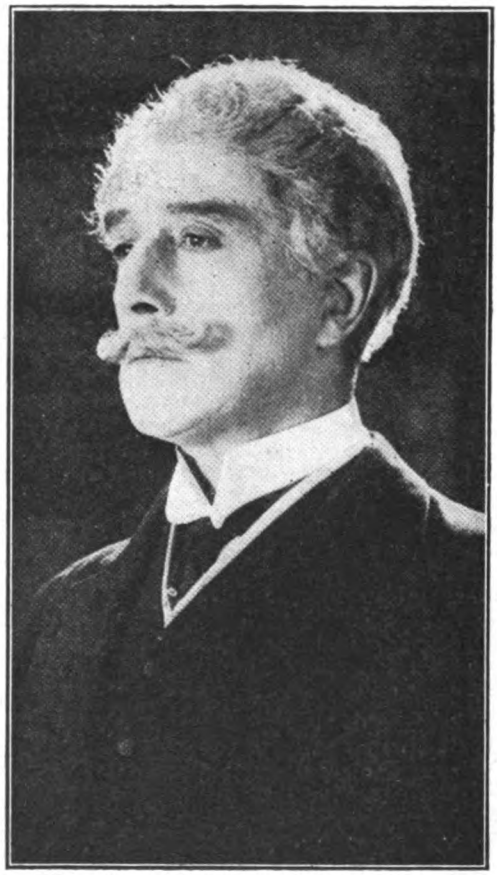
"In addition to the facial disguises, the character kits required for the various parts have to be carefully thought out, and L. and H. Nathan have been most successful in providing these for me.

"Naturally, I take a very great delight in testing my disguises upon every conceivable occasion, and in connection with my impersonation of the taxi-driver I narrowly escaped being ejected forcibly from the studio.

"Having adjusted the make-up, which you will see entirely alters the shape of my face, I stood about in the studio to see if any of my *confrères* would recognize me. Presently I saw the managing director, Mr. Jeffrey Bernerd, to whom, of course, I am well known, whisper some instructions to one of his staff, whereupon the latter approached me with an air of authority and ordered me to get outside.

"'Lor lumme!' I exclaimed, in a hoarse voice, 'I ain't doin' no 'arm, am I? I'm waiting for some bloke 'ere, and you don't think I'm going to 'ang about outside in the perishin' cold, do yer?'

"At this juncture, the managing director, fearing that blood would be shed, was about to intervene when the producer called 'Mr. Norwood, please,' and I stepped



In "The Empty House" the detective assumes a disguise in the hope that the suspect will penetrate it, and thereby be decoyed into following Sherlock Holmes to his home. This is how Mr. Norwood effected the make-up, which is intentionally transparent.

In this character the make-up consists of a false nose, pince-nez, and moustache, which are made in one piece, removable in an instant. The disguise was, however, sufficiently realistic to enable Mr. Norwood to play a practical joke upon the producer.

straight into the scene, leaving behind me two speechless men who wondered if they were 'seeing things'!

"Another disguise for 'A Scandal in Bohemia,' a photograph of which appears herewith, was tested in a similar manner. A few days before we commenced work on the first of the series I donned the false nose, pince-nez, and moustache (which are made in one piece), and wearing a huge ulster I walked into the studio with my knees bent, reducing my height to about five feet four inches. Assuming a weak and nervous voice, I approached my friend Maurice Elvey, the producer.

" 'Please, I've been told to see you about the part of Dr. Watson,' I said.

A scene from the film version of "A Scandal in Bohemia," in which another effective disguise is shown.

[This and the preceding photographs were taken by H. Germain Burger, of the Stoll Productions.]

" ' I'm afraid you are too short,' he replied, politely ; ' besides, your moustache is much too heavy for the character.'

" ' But Dr. Watson had a moustache, did he not ? ' I wailed.

" ' Yes, but——well, I'm sorry, but you are quite unsuitable.'

" ' Then how would I do for Sherlock Holmes ? ' I asked, reverting to my natural voice and drawing myself up to my full height. The expression on my victim's face baffles description !

" Maurice Elvey, the best of friends and the most tactful of producers, will, I am sure, forgive me if I tell you one more anecdote at his expense.

" I must explain that I have succeeded in ' pulling his leg ' so many times when trying my new disguises that he has become thoroughly suspicious of me, and is constantly on the alert lest he should be caught again.

" One morning I was sitting in the studio awaiting my call, disguised as the old bald-headed Nonconformist minister, when Mr. Elvey entered. I nodded to him affably, and he returned the compliment, though without seeming to recognize me, and passed on. In the middle of the floor he stopped and gazed round him as though he were looking for somebody, then he walked straight up to a tall super who was disguised with bushy eyebrows and a heavy moustache and slapped him heartily on the back.

" ' It's no use, Eille, old man, I've found you out this time,' he exclaimed, gleefully.

" ' That's where you're wrong,' said the old minister, who by this time was standing at his elbow. ' Try again.'

" I am now living in deadly fear that Elvey will some day find a means of getting his own back ! "

Perhaps the most successful disguise of the series is that of the Japanese opium-smoker in " The Man with the Twisted Lip," which, strange though it may seem, was carried out without the application of any grease-paint whatever.

Naturally, Mr. Norwood is not prepared to give away his " trade secrets," but without revealing too much it may be said that the effect was produced by distorting the features by a process of strapping (the apparatus for which is concea'ed by the wig), and that he wore a special set of false teeth in order to alter the shape of the mouth. Those who see the film will be able to observe these details for themselves, for the disguise is removed piece by piece in a close-up view.

In the case of the tramp disguise there are no false features of any description—the irregular effect of the nose being obtained by judicious shading, and the droop of the lower eyelid by a process of strapping somewhat similar to that employed in the " Jap " make-up.

Another highly successful make-up in which the features are distorted is that of the newsvendor in " The Tiger of San Pedro." It will be noticed that the ears are bent forward, the nostrils are distended, and the lower lip is curled over, all of which effects were produced by ingenious devices of Mr. Norwood's own invention. Needless to say these disguises, as well as that of the taxi-driver (in which the cheeks are padded on the inside), are extremely uncomfortable, and cannot be worn for more than about an hour at a time. In this respect, if in no other, the film actor has the advantage over his brother of the theatre, for, if needs be, the producer and camera men will wait whilst the actors take a rest, whereas an audience in the theatre would soon become impatient if they were expected to give the performers a long interval every time their disguises began to tire them !

Another make-up from " A Scandal in Bohemia " is that of the actor with the pointed beard. Although the disguise is not quite so complicated, Mr. Norwood experienced considerable difficulty in concealing the join between the beard and the face. Eventually he succeeded in overcoming the obstacle, but no amount of coaxing will persuade him to reveal the secret of the beard which, besides being convincing, may be affixed and removed in an instant.

The disguise of the Colonel in " The Empty House " appears, at first sight, a little obvious and " theatrical," and lest it should be thought that in this instance the actor has failed to obtain an entirely convincing effect, it may be as well to explain that, for the purposes of the story, the disguise is *intended* to be penetrable, for Sherlock Holmes enters the house of a suspect in this make-up in the hope that the latter will recognize him and thus be decoyed into following him home.

Bearing these facts in mind, one cannot but admire the skilful manner in which Mr. Norwood has evolved a disguise which, without being too painfully obvious, is just sufficient to arouse our suspicion.

The Sherlock Holmes picture plays, though necessarily reconstructed for film purposes, are worthy of the original short stories both in production and photography, and if immortality were comparative one would almost feel inclined to say that Sherlock Holmes has been rendered even more " immortal " by the acting and make-up of Eille Norwood.

The Sentimental Murderer

By EDWARD CECIL

ILLUSTRATED BY W. HATHERELL, R.I.

THE house was just like many houses which Gregson knew in Barcastle, but everything was on a bigger scale. It was a sort of *villa de luxe*. It was detached, as the villas of Gregson's customers in Barcastle were detached. But it stood much more severely alone than any Barcastle villa, although it stood in a road.

Its gardens were positively spacious. It was like a country house, and every other house in the road was like a country house also. But, of course, in a London suburb the open country all around was wanting. Still, the road aimed at being a road of country houses for City gentlemen, and succeeded very well.

Round the gardens and separating the houses there were trees and evergreens. Some of the trees were pine trees, and all the evergreens were fully grown, so that every house was very isolated from its neighbours. The particular house which Gregson was observing was peculiarly well surrounded by trees. Gregson noted this with pleasure. He was going to commit a murder. The more secluded the house the better for him.

Really the road was very quiet in its high-class respectability.

Gregson walked out into the middle of the road and looked up and down it. But he did not see a single human being. He had already wasted quite half an hour walking up and down the road, and he had not seen anybody in the road except himself. There was not even a policeman. Nothing could have been better. Gregson told himself he was in luck. But he still hesitated. He was quite an amateur at his job. Most murderers are. But some of them more so than others. Gregson was really an amateur at crime. The crime he contemplated was his first crime. But, after all, a murder is a comparatively simple crime, if one has just got the strength and the courage to strike the blow. That, at any rate, is what Gregson told himself. And Gregson was physically a strong man. If somewhat clumsily built, he was at any rate built on a large scale. He stood six feet high, and much rowing on the river at Barcastle had made his arms strong. And, after all, his determination to kill his man was also strong. He had only thought so far of his physical ability to do that which he had set out to do, and of the absolute righteousness of what he was doing. He was a man who believed in righteousness.

So Gregson shrugged his shoulders, opened the side gate to the house quietly, and vanished into the shrubbery at the side of the house.

It was a perfect evening in midsummer. A perfectly still, breathless evening, fragrant with the scents of flowers. Close to the shrubbery in which Gregson presently was crouching there was a herbaceous border.

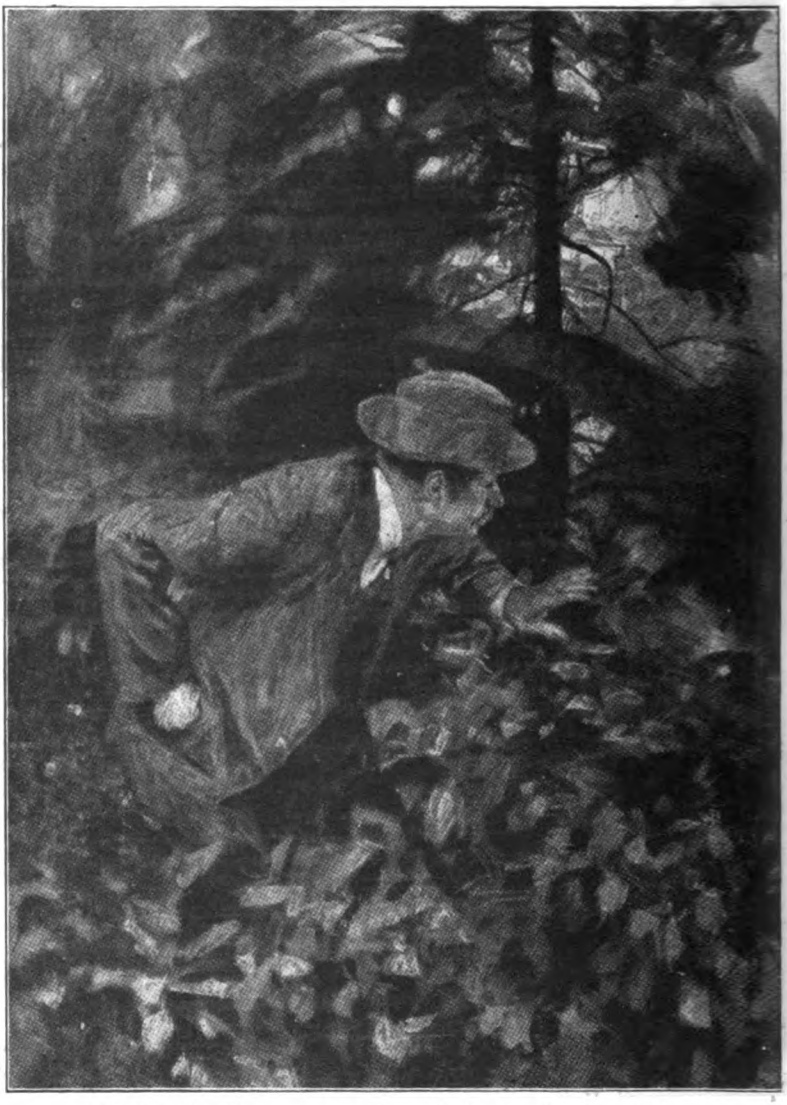
A few industrious bees were still gathering honey even though the light had begun to fade. Gregson from his hiding-place could see not only the herbaceous border, but also a well-kept lawn. And beyond it he saw a pergola which was a mass of pink and crimson rambler roses. It was all very beautiful and well kept. Close-cropped grass, weedless paths, a profusion of flowers—the garden of a wealthy man, full of the peace of the last hour of a summer evening.

Then suddenly Gregson started, and his hand gripped the handle of the weapon in his pocket. For there, in the distance, sitting in a wicker chair in the pergola, was the man whom he had come to murder. He was in evening dress, a gentlemanly-looking man, enjoying the summer evening's peace and an excellent cigar.

Gregson looked at his quarry intently. He had hunted him down carefully, and Gregson, who had never hated anybody in his life before, was full of his strong, virile hatred of the smug and well-groomed moneylender who sat there amongst his roses.

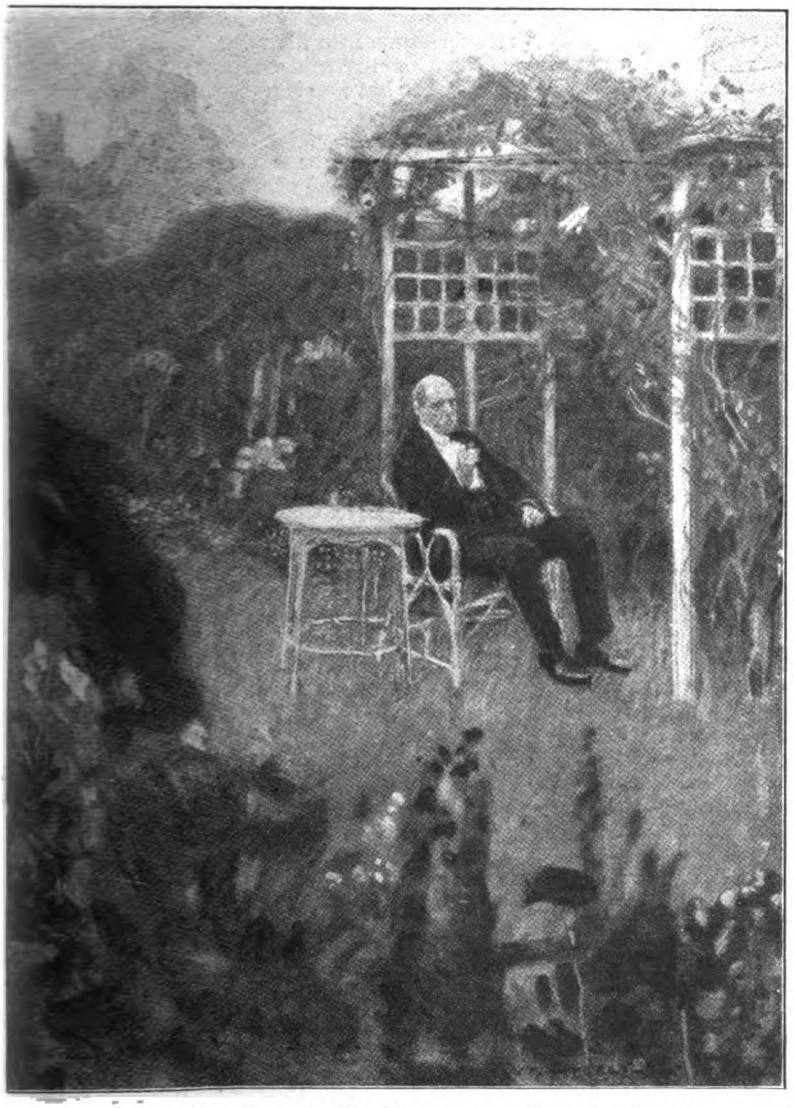
That man held in his hands the power to destroy Gregson's life, to shut up Gregson's shop, to break the life of Gregson's wife, and to reduce her, in reducing Gregson, to the misery of bankruptcy and grinding poverty. And Gregson was a mild-mannered and respectable man who dearly loved his wife. The man in the pergola was a pitiless brute of a man who crushed lives in order that he might live in luxury, a man who had definitely stated that he intended to crush Gregson's life and his wife's life. But not only his life and his wife's life, but the lives of Gregson's children, who, with the ruin of their father, would have their education cut short. Gregson had a son at the Barcastle Grammar School and a daughter at the Barcastle High School for Girls. They were good children who tried to be good as Gregson and his wife had always tried to be good, and who worked well at school and were getting on well.

So, at any rate, there were four lives—



"Suddenly Gregson started, and his hand gripped the weapon had come

Gregson's, his wife's, and his two children's—which were going to be crushed in order that that smug moneylender might get his money. How Gregson hated him as he watched him sitting there enjoying his cigar!



in his pocket. For there, in the distance, was the man whom he to murder."

It was a sad story, the story of Josiah Gregson—a hard-working, industrious, but under-intelligent and over-kind-hearted little grocer in Barcastle, who had got into money difficulties and had gone to Mr. Geoffrey Gordon, who had an address in a quiet street near Piccadilly and lent money to those who were foolish enough to borrow from him.

Well, Gregson was going to be equal with him! Gregson, who had never hated in his life, when he did hate, could hate! His mind was made up. He was going to save his wife and children. He was going to revenge his own wrongs! He might as well be a murderer as a bankrupt! He was going to settle it once and for all that night! He might be a worm, but he was a worm which would turn! Doubtless he was only one of many. He was going to act for himself and for others. He would be square that night with Mr. Geoffrey Gordon, whose real name, no doubt, was not Gordon at all, but Isaacs, or Samuels, or Levy!

Gregson waited. He felt he had to wait. He could not go down to the pergola, where he would be seen by anyone looking from the windows of the house. He had to wait. And presently his patience was rewarded, for Mr. Geoffrey Gordon got up from his chair, threw away the stump of his cigar, and walked slowly across the lawn to the house. He was walking almost straight towards Gregson. He looked quite an old man. His shoulders were bent, his hair was grey, and his step was slow and steady. He walked straight up to the house and into the room in a corner of the house quite close to where Gregson was. It had French windows, which were open to the lawn, and Gregson's heart beat fast when he realized how easy his task was, for he stepped out from the shrubbery and followed his quarry into the room. It was only a matter of a dozen

steps or so, and there he was—in a quiet little room, furnished as a sort of small library and smoking-room, carpeted with a deep pile carpet, and papered and curtained with wallpaper and curtains of a restful shade of green.

"Good evening, Mr. Gordon," said Gregson, as he entered the room.

Gordon, the moneylender, had crossed the room and had put his hand on a book on a small table at the side of a deep and soft-cushioned easy-chair, and was either going to sit down in the chair or take the book up to bed with him, when he heard Gregson's salutation. He did not start, although he was taken by surprise. He turned round and smiled.

"You have the advantage of me," he said. "I don't know who you are."

"Oh, yes, you do!" cried Gregson. "My name is Josiah Gregson. I am a grocer, and I live in Barcastle. Five or six years ago I began borrowing money from you. Now the time has come when I have got to pay. I can't pay, and you know it! You have decided to ruin me, and I am here—to talk to you!"

"Sit down, Mr. Gregson," said Gordon, quietly.

Gregson sat down on the edge of a chair. He was afraid to sit down properly in the chair because it was deep and well-cushioned. He sat on the edge, and he rested his strong rough hands on his knees.

"What is it you want to say to me?" asked Gordon.

"All I have to say to you," Gregson replied, "is that I can't pay and that I won't pay! Much more than half the money I owe you is interest—exorbitant interest which has mounted up to a sum I can't pay and never can hope to pay."

"Then all I can do," said Gordon, very quietly, "is to enforce payment in the usual way. I remember your case now, quite well, Mr. Gregson. I haven't got the slightest intention of foregoing my claim upon you. I never forego any claim."

"You—never—forego—any—claim," repeated Gregson. "It is my intention to force you to forego one claim!"

And, very slowly, never taking his eyes off the face of the man he intended to murder, he got up and stood between his victim and the door.

Gordon never moved. He just smiled.

"It is not the first time," he said, "that my life has been threatened."

"It will be the last time," said Gregson. "Your life is now going to be taken away from you. You callous brute! You think nothing of breaking me and of ruining my home! You are going to disgrace me and break my wife's heart, and destroy my two children's education! I have come here to-night to destroy you! If I escape, well and good. If I don't, also well and good. At any rate, I shall have saved others from getting into the power of a blood-sucking Jew by sending that blood-sucking Jew to his account before he has time to get any more victims into his net!"

"Very well," said Gordon, calmly. "Do what you have come to do, and do it as quickly and as quietly as you can. There is no particular necessity to disturb the house, and if you are quick and skilful you will have a very good chance of getting away undetected. I don't intend to offer the slightest resistance. All I ask, Mr. Gregson, is that you cut out all the cant about your misery and my usury, and just strike your blow clean and hard!"

GREGSON stood motionless. Already all his muscles were taut, ready to act. Already his mind was made up. The venom of his hatred could not be stronger than it was. Yet he stood motionless, and his victim sat motionless also, in his chair, looking up into the face of his executioner.

"Come, Gregson!" said Mr. Geoffrey Gordon. "Do what you came to do, and do it quickly! I have always despised men like you, Gregson. Don't prove me right by showing yourself a miserable, hesitating coward!"

Gregson took out of his pocket the revolver which he had bought that morning at a shop in Holborn. It was loaded and ready.

"Oh!" observed Mr. Geoffrey Gordon. "Shooting is your method! It has only one disadvantage—the report of the weapon attracts attention. This is particularly true on a still summer's evening like this evening. The sound of your shot will be heard all over this house and garden, and probably also by several neighbours. Still, the choice is yours—not mine. May I, in this last moment of my life, offer you a word of advice? It will probably save your own life, and that perhaps will be some consolation to your wife and children, in whose interests, I understand, you are now acting."

"It is dangerous to talk to me like that!" muttered Gregson, thickly.

But he was now trembling, for he was face to face with something which he could not understand.

"Stiffen yourself, my good man!" said Gordon, sharply. "You will never get through with it if you don't!"

"There has been enough talking, you Jew!" answered Gregson, and his finger lingered on the trigger.

"All I can say is that there has not been enough talking," said Gordon. "From your

point of view, there is the advice that I can give you as yet unspoken."

"Speak it, then!" cried Gregson.

"Very well. Put the muzzle of your weapon right here, close against my heart, so that there may be no doubt about your aim. Probably you are a poor shot, and shooting with a revolver at a distance, even though the distance is small, is not always accurate in the hand of an incompetent person. Moreover, if the weapon is discharged right up against the shirt-front of this evening shirt there will be a mark which will show that I was shot at close quarters. If you do as I have told you, all you will have to do is to put the weapon into my hand after you have shot me, and you will have several minutes to escape unnoticed by the way you came. When my body is found, it will be quite obvious that I have shot myself! In this way you will be able to continue your incompetent life, after I have solved the mystery of human existence."

Gregson was visibly and actually trembling now. It was as much as he could do to hold the revolver in his hand. And for a full minute there was unbroken silence in that little room looking out on the peaceful, well-kept garden, now shrouded in the first dusk of the summer night.

AT last Gregson found his voice.

"Won't you let me off my debt?" he asked. "That would be the simpler way."

"No," said Mr. Geoffrey Gordon. "You owe me the money, and you must pay it. It is all the same to me whether you kill me or not. It may surprise you, but as I was sitting in my pergola, smoking my cigar, just now, I was contemplating suicide. I saw a Harley Street specialist this afternoon, and in any case this is the last summer I shall ever see. A quick death would be welcome to me. I should be very grateful to you if you would save me the trouble of committing suicide."

"Wait a minute!" exclaimed Gregson, and he went back to his chair and sat down again with his revolver still in his hand.

"There is no immediate hurry," said Gordon. "Though I should be glad if you spared me any unnecessary delay."

"Why should I spare you anything? You have never spared any man or any woman. But I am rather puzzled. You are not the sort of man I expected to find you."

"That is not surprising. You have called me a Jew. I am not a Jew. I am a Yorkshireman. It is quite true that my real name is not Gordon. It is Robinson. Geoffrey Gordon is only my professional name. In my private life I am Thomas Robinson."

"So you are a Yorkshireman," said Gregson. "That accounts for your pluck."

"I have taken a good many risks in my time, in the course of my profession," said Gordon, "but I am not taking any particular risk now. What I have told you, Mr. Gregson, is absolutely true. In no event can my life be prolonged for more than a few months. Your coming to-night is very opportune; though, of course, you had no reason to know that it would be."

"But even then you have more pluck than I should have," said Gregson.

"That means very little, for you, Gregson, have no pluck at all. You would not be in the position you are in now if you had had any. You haven't even now got the pluck to finish me off. It is rather interesting to me to find that this is so. I have long held a theory that here would be very few murders indeed if the victims didn't resist. I happen to be in a position that I don't want to resist you, and I find immediately that you can't carry out your purpose. But what can it matter to you what kind of man I am? From your point of view I am simply a Jew moneylender. Why don't you finish me off? You came here to do it. Why not do it?"

"It isn't altogether easy," said Gregson, slowly, "to kill a dying man."

Gordon smiled.

"How sentimental you are, Gregson! I suppose it is part of your habitual feebleness and incompetence!"

"I am not so feeble and incompetent as you think!" returned Gregson, spurred to retaliate.

"Prove it!" said Gordon, deliberately.

"You are a strange man, Mr. Gordon," Gregson said, looking round the room. "It looks as if you are a great reader."

"I am. Reading books has been my relaxation for many years past. I have spent many hours in this room reading books."

It looked as if this was quite true, for the room was well stocked with bookcases and bookshelves.

"And you have a good garden here," Gregson continued. "I have myself always been fond of flowers."

"I think I may also remark that you are a strange man, Gregson! At any rate, you are a strange murderer. You are as incompetent at your job as a murderer as you certainly have been at your job as a grocer."

"What shall I gain?" asked Gregson, suddenly. "What shall I gain if I do kill you? You are going to die in any case."

"You will gain the satisfaction I suppose you thought you would gain when you came here. You hate me. You would get the satisfaction of satisfying your hatred. Come, Gregson, stiffen yourself!"

"You are playing with me, Mr. Gordon," said Gregson, feebly.

"I am not playing with you. I assure you that I am not playing with you. If you will carry out your intention, you shall carry away with you a discharge of your debt."

"Do you mean that?"

"I usually mean what I say."

At that moment there broke out of the silence of the summer evening, from somewhere quite near, the notes of a grand piano, a fine instrument, being played with the touch of a fine musician. Gregson knew that it was a grand piano, and he knew also that the player was a musician of skill and understanding.

"That is my daughter playing," said Mr. Geoffrey Gordon. "She often plays late at night, like this, from sheer love of her music. She is very fond of Chopin, and so am I. She is playing one of the Preludes."

Gregson sat motionless. Then suddenly he jumped to his feet.

"I can't!" he exclaimed. "I can't do it! It is not a night fit for a murder! This beautiful garden of yours, this book-lined room, your daughter playing, and you—a dying man! I can't do it! I may be a poor, muddling, incompetent sort of man, but when it comes to committing a crime—I can't do it! I might have been able to do it if you had been what I thought you were. But now, I can't!"

And he put his revolver in his pocket.

Mr. Geoffrey Gordon got up from his chair. He smiled, and then sighed and sat down at a writing-table near the window and took a sheet of notepaper in his hand and his fountain-pen from his pocket. He shrugged his shoulders.

"Wait a minute before you go, Gregson," he said, and then began writing.

Gregson went and stood behind him and looked over his shoulder.

"I don't see why you should give me a discharge from my debt," he said, presently.

"Neither do I," replied Gordon. "But I am doing it. It is difficult to understand why we do things sometimes, but still we do them. It is difficult also to understand why we don't do things sometimes, eh, Gregson?"

Gregson said nothing. He simply stood there waiting. And presently Mr. Geoffrey Gordon turned round in his chair and handed up to him the discharge of his debt which he had written.

"We have had an interesting little talk to-night, Gregson," he said. "Take this away with you as a memento of the occasion. Don't try and say anything. It is difficult to say, perhaps, what you may be thinking. I am quite a wealthy man, and I can afford to do what I like with my money. And if either of your children are fond of books, and if you wish to remember me at all kindly during the next few months, which will be the last months of my life, you might encourage them to read and to love books. . . . . You had better go now, Gregson, and go quickly. My daughter, when she has finished playing, usually comes to say good night to me in this room. She generally finds me reading here at this hour of the night. Good night, Gregson."

He got up and held out his hand. Gregson shook it in silence and walked out through the open French window.

SOLUTION OF LAST MONTH'S "EXERCISE IN ANAGRAMS."

10, The **Esplanade,**
Folkestone.

Dear **Christopher,**

You will be glad to hear that I am now well enough to **perambulate** almost daily in **exploitation** of my **excavated** garden. I shall have some fine **geraniums** doing well in my **conservatory,** while **heliotrope** and **carnations** in the **flowerpots** are thriving and **numerous.** There is also good promise of **dahlias** later on.

Towards the **gloaming** of a recent **afternoon** I was scanning the ground for a lost **object,** with efforts which were fairly **regular** and **persistent.** Happening to look up, I saw a **varlet** of **untutored** mind behind the **parapet** adjoining a heap of **potatoes** which stands there. From these, or from the **implements** of the **garden,** he picked up a missile, and without **warning** hit the **stomachic** part of my **corporeal** frame, using (so to speak) a kind of **argument** not easily **rebutted.** I was **astounded** for the moment; then I rebuked him with no little **asperity,** but he bolted without any **apology.** For myself I was glad to be spared anything in the way of a **fracture.**

A week ago I was in a **draughty** place in the **cathedral.** As a **result** I have been much out of sorts and **indisposed** since. To add to my discomfort, I have run out of the right sort of **provender** for the **stove** in my **study,** and have been compelled to use **anthracite** of an **inferior** kind.

I am by nature an absolute **optimist** and my **temperament** nearly always **buoyant,** but after **eventualities** like these my mind has been in an extremely **harassed** condition.

I have a **communication** for you of considerable **importance.** The gossips have lately been saying that Bob **Percival** and my niece, Susan **Buchanan,** have been given to **flirtations** too often and **ostentatiously.** As a matter of fact, their **betrothal** is at least a month old. I wonder what the old **dowager** lady living in **Albemarle** Street has to say. Neither of them can ignore an old **relative** without being **disloyal.** I have already been **consulted** about the **trousseau.** My **masculine** opinion, **forsooth!**

I am sending you a **package** of **spinach** and **artichokes,** both of which I hope you will find **acceptable.**

With an assurance of my **friendship** and **affection,**
I am always,
Your affectionate **godfather,**
Reginald Montagu.

THE INFERNAL MACHINE

by F. Britten Austin

ILLUSTRATED BY S. SEYMOUR LUCAS

IN that busy quarter of an hour ere the great liner cast off from the landing-stage, but few of the preoccupied passengers noticed the handcuffed man hurried by two detectives up the third-class gangway into the ship. Those that did shrank back uncomfortably. He stumbled up like a man on the way to execution, pale, haggard, withdrawn into himself, faculties numbed by the imminence of his fate. His eyes stared without seeing.

The two detectives hustled him below, into the depths of the ship, along electric-lit corridors where the light of day never came. A steward preceded them as guide, indicated at last a cabin on the lowest berth-deck. The door was opened and he was thrust

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into the tiny apartment, dimly lit by a porthole close under the roof, the river-water lapping green along its glass. The prisoner stood stock-still where he was pushed, bereft apparently of voluntary motion with the limbs that shook helplessly as in an ague. His mean little face was immobilized almost to imbecility. One of the detectives stood over him, looked into his vacant eyes.

" Now, no nonsense, Jake—or we'll have to keep you tied up all the way," he said, impersonally. With that he unlocked the handcuffs. The prisoner's arms, freed, fell limply pendent. The detective turned and went out of the cabin.

The prisoner watched his exit with lacklustre eyes that stared in a vague and increasing horror as the sound of the key turning in the lock penetrated slowly to his consciousness. Suddenly, as though full perception released a spring in him, he leaped at the door.

" Let me out ! Let me out ! Let me out, I say ! " he screamed at the top of his voice, hammering violently at the door. " Police ! Police ! Police ! 'Ere ! 'Ere ! *'Ere !* Come back ! Come back ! " His cry rang out on a piercing note of almost maniac terror, of extreme urgency of appeal. " I've got something to tell yer ! I've got something to tell yer ! *Don't let 'er start !* Don't let 'er start ! Oh, Gawd, don't let 'er start ! 'Ere ! 'Ere ! Come back ! Police ! Come back ! " He exhausted himself with a whirlwind of blows, hands and feet battering upon the closed door, with a flood of agonized appeals mingled with blood-curdling curses, that dropped suddenly to whimpering humility and broke out again in a renewed fury of vehemence.

None answered him. The door remained closed. As he recoiled from it, gasping in despair and terror, he heard the shriek of the liner's siren in its last warning, the clank and rumble of cables paid out, the first throb of her engines awaking to life. A swirl of water in motion darkened the glass disc of the port.

He sank down to a seat upon his bunk, breathing heavily as from weak and overstrained lungs, his pinched face a ghastly grey. His eyes fixed themselves, fascinated, upon that porthole which the disturbed water obscured from instant to instant. They had cast off, were moving out upon their voyage across the ocean.

THE reaction from his intense effort left him gripped in a paralyzing certitude of isolation, of abandonment, of utter impotence. Penned here in this narrow steel cell far below decks, like a prisoner in an *oubliette* to be forgotten, cries and noise were alike useless ; if heard, were only to be contemptuously ignored. Numbed to the core of him, he ceased to make a sound, sat vaguely staring before him into flitting mental pictures where his conscious intelligence intervened only by fits and starts.

He saw himself in the dilapidated parlour behind the boarded-up saloon in the squalid street beyond the dock-gates ; saw once more the white, pinched face of the deformed little German-Jew chemist light up with evil triumph as he hoisted the heavy suit-case on to the table around which the " comrades " craned forward with eager interest. He saw him open it and, in a breathless silence, draw forth—a chunk of coal ! The little Jew held it up for the appreciation of his companions.

" Dere you are, comrades ! " He heard again the throaty, malicious chuckle of the inventor's voice. " Cast in steel—I enamelled it mineself—and you can do vat you like vid it." He giggled like one diabolically insane. " You can drop it—you can hit it—you can do anyding you like vid it—*except burn it !* "

O'Donnell, the big Irishman, had taken it from him like a loving-cup, and had gazed down upon it with almost affectionate admiration.

" And if it should by accident be shovelled into a liner's furnaces, comrade ? " he had asked, grimly facetious, in his pleasant Irish tones, his phraseology emphasizing, as was his wont, the fact that he was a man of education.

" It vill blow de belly out of her ! " the little chemist had answered, with a sudden violent ferocity. " Dose explosives—dey vill blow de belly out of de biggest ship dat efer sailed ! "

O'Donnell had smiled amiably and, still holding aloft the chunk of pseudo-coal like a loving-cup, had looked around upon the clustered, gaunt faces of the " comrades " as though in selection of one to whom to give it.

" Comrades ! " he had exclaimed, his soft voice never more mellifluous, " we are going to strike a real blow this time—one the blood-suckers will feel and remember ! They shall know that the solidarity of labour is no vain boast ! "

Neither in Jake Bravinsky's reverie of reminiscence, nor at the moment upon those eager faces craned towards the thing the big Irishman held, was there any perception of unintended irony. A longshoreman's strike was in progress, and the white-collared brigade recruited from the desks of the shipping company's skyscraper had sworn to turn the *Gargantuan* round and get her to sea again, with mails, passengers, bunker-coal, and some at least of her cargo. They were going to make good, it seemed, thanks not a little to the strong force of police who

protected them from the none too benevolent solicitude of the awkwardly-idle workers who massed sullenly beyond the locked dock-gates. But not one of that grim little group in the dilapidated parlour was either a striker or a worker.

Neither Chlodzky the Pole, Lipoff the Russian, nor he, Jake Bravinsky, the weedy, degenerate product of two generations in East-end London, had ever done a day's work in their lives except under the stern pressure of necessity or the law. He, Jake Bravinsky, urgently needing distance between himself and the English police, had certainly assisted to fire the stokehold of a freighter all the way from Liverpool to New York—and when they arrived the chief engineer had met him half-way and fired him. That was his only recent occasion of labour, and none of the others could boast of activities less remote. Yet they were not conscious hypocrites, these men. Viewing themselves in the distorted mirrors of their souls, they were rather martyrs, they who preached, with fierce energies sustained on a meagre pittance from mysterious sources, the Cause, the Red Revolution that should, in theory at least, glut the poverty-stricken with the wealth of their oppressors.

Red Revolutionary also was Rosa Bauermann, the most fanatic, the least self-seeking of them all. He, Jake Bravinsky, could never look upon her without a little secret awe—and yet her ugly great gash of a red mouth, her blazing dark eyes, her bobbed black hair, fascinated him, stirred him to the depths.

"Whose shall be the honour?" Comrade O'Donnell had pursued, looking round upon the group, his pleasant, well-bred voice in ironic incongruity with his more than shabby appearance and the terrible implication of his query. "What comrade's hand shall deal the blow?"

And Rosa Bauermann had turned her head towards him, Jake Bravinsky, had looked upon him—had looked right into him so that he shuddered—with those great dark eyes that flashed enigmas. And Jake Bravinsky's little human soul was suddenly molten as though with volcanic fires—he had caught his breath with the strangeness of it, could not, for an agonized moment where Rosa Bauermann seemed like a brooding divinity that filled the room ready to bestow itself upon high daring, cry out his acceptance.

His own voice had sounded strange to him when he uttered it. "Give it 'ere, comrade! I'll do the job! 'Aven't I done——?" and he had boasted vaingloriously of fire-raising and sabotage. He ventured a glance towards Comrade Rosa, found her still smiling in fierce appreciation, and boasted again. And Comrade O'Donnell had handed him the lump of pseudo-coal.

And then the next picture—the funnels and upper works of the *Gargantuan* lividly illumined in the glare of the purplish-white arc-lamps that painted her on the night as the volunteer gangs worked feverishly at her, shift relieving shift. The long line of warehouses in the deep contrasting shadow from that blaze blackened out the bottom of the picture—a blackness to which he crept and dodged, avoiding scrutiny, a heavy object close-hugged to his breast.

On the quayside, criss-crossed by railroad tracks, locomotives puffed and shrieked as they butted their trains of clanking freight-cars, vehicle by vehicle, to the tips. Car after car, quoined on the platform of the cages, rose its twenty feet upon the elevator, heeled suddenly, and discharged its black contents, with a clattering, clanging roar, down the iron shoot into the bunkers of the ship. Train beyond train, of coal and merchandise, stood ranged upon the sidings, awaiting its turn for sling or cataract.

TOWARDS one of those trains, the nearest, he crept stealthily from shadow to shadow, weak-kneed fear and diabolical malice at conflict within him. He cursed, automatically, under his breath, in an escape of nervous tension, as he approached it. It stood engineless, unguarded, but to his disgust not one car of it was in the shadow.

For a moment he had hesitated, his burden heavy in his arms, in a temptation of relinquishment. Then the image of Rosa Bauermann, her smile of enigma turning upon him, had come up before him—and the fierce little chemist's exultant phrase, "Blow de belly out of her!" had echoed in strange depths of him, an invocation that called up a flood of his bitter primitive hatred for these phenomena of a civilization from which he was excluded, and which he himself was impotent to create. The Sioux prowling around the stockade, the barbarian bursting in upon the monuments of Ancient Rome, ground their teeth even as he, in just such a blind jealous rage of destruction.

During long minutes he had crouched in the shadow for his spring, awaiting opportunity. Then, in a temporary complete desertion of that stretch of quay, he leaped forward to the nearest truck, the last in the train.

In the full illumination, the white car-number, the black on white of the large label—"34,518—Bunker-Coal—SS. *Gargantuan*"—were vividly distinct before his vision, on a level with his eyes. He judged his distance, and hurled the thing he carried. The lump of pseudo-coal fell upon the heaped-up coal of the truck, indistinguishable from any other lump.

" Blow de belly out of her ! "—the fiercely vindictive phrase of the little German-Jew cripple had rung in his ears as he turned and fled into the night.

Then the great moment of relief when, a seemingly endless period of waiting in the shadows by the dock-gates suddenly terminated, he had mingled with the crowd of a shift coming off work and under the protection of a posse of policemen had passed into the street where the sullen crowd of strikers congregated. His job was done—even now perhaps that artfully dissimulated canister of steel was sliding into the depths of the great liner like a germ of death unperceived but inevitable. Now to announce it to the comrades !

The picture of Rosa Bauermann, with her shock of black hair over her disturbing eyes, her great red gash of a mouth parted in a smile that was no longer enigmatic, haunted him as he dodged out of the crowd of " scabs " and sped, at a run, down the squalid streets to that little boarded-up saloon. His heart thumped heavily and unsteadily in his breast as he gave the arranged sequence of knocks upon its muddied door. He waited. It opened not. He knocked again, and again waited. Still it remained shut, no sound or hint of life behind it. A quavering anxiety came up in him—surely they would have waited for his return ?—Rosa, at least ? What had happened ? He knocked more loudly, yet now sure in advance that there would be no response. The house echoed under his knock like a place deserted.

Then a policeman came round the corner, approached him with the measured, unhurried step of a patrol upon his normal beat. Jake waited not for that scrutiny he never dared confront. Whelmed in a disappointment that chilled his body, he had slunk away, a bitter curse upon his lips.

He was filled with a sombre anger against his confederates as he shuffled off to the miserable garret which was his home. They had better not play any tricks on him—or, sure as fate, he'd peach ! He'd show 'em whether he, Jake Bravinsky, was a man to be trifled with ! He had a little vision of the group of them, Rosa included, standing in the dock, himself as State's evidence scorning their impotent rage. A variant of this picture was the last clear thought in his mind as he drew his ragged, dirty blanket over him and sank into a sleep that was the profound reaction after the strains of the day.

HE had awakened with the touch of a hand upon his shoulder. His blind start from the bed was the instinctive movement of an animal habitually under menace and now trapped. He looked up, in a pang of terror, into the face bent over him, the heavy, impassive countenance of a policeman. As he glanced around him, in the chill grey light of early morning, he saw that his garret was abnormally peopled—another policeman behind the one who had awakened him, and, near the door, two men in plain clothes whom he instinctively recognized as from Scotland Yard.

" Come quietly, Jake," had said the voice from that moustachioed face up to which he stared. " We've got you."

The tightening of the grip upon his shoulder bore in upon him the hopelessness of escape. He let himself relax, resigned himself.

" What's it for ? " he had asked, sullenly. He remembered now, vividly, the sudden panic fear he had all but betrayed. Was it for his last night's job ? The thought drove the blood from his heart—a life sentence loomed startlingly inevitable, life or little less. He had not dared to raise his eyes.

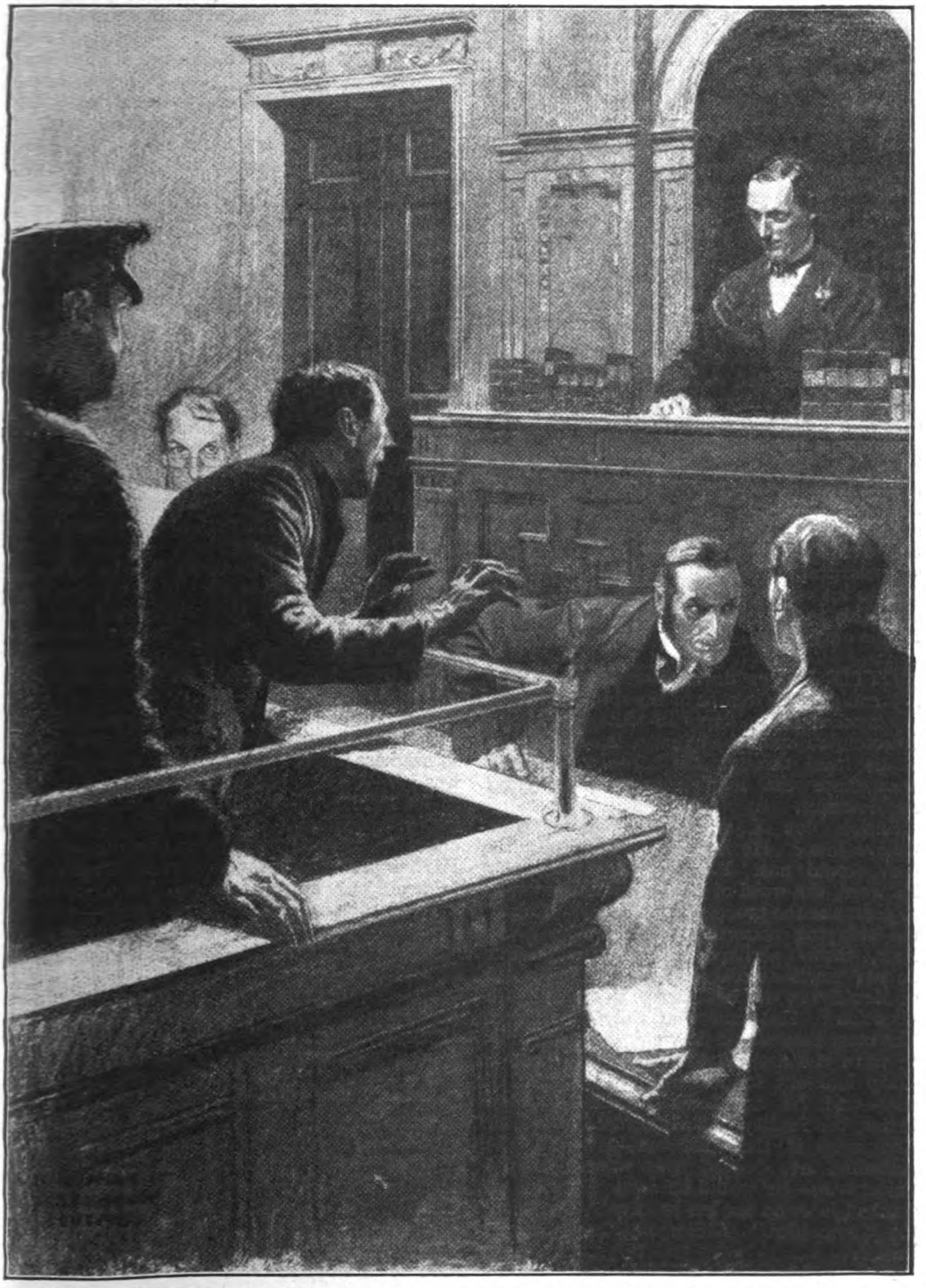
It was one of the plain-clothes men who had answered.

" I have a warrant for your arrest, Jake Bravinsky, on a charge of arson in Glasgow last May. I give you the usual warning."

Glasgow last May ! He had almost shrieked mocking laughter in the revulsion of his relief.

A few hours later, shrunken between the two large policemen, he had shuffled into the dock of a district police-court just commencing its business of the morning. The magistrate, who had glanced up at him with contemptuous indifference, could not suspect the exultant, savage triumph which filled that distorted little soul behind the pinched and pallid face. *He had done, 'em !* They hadn't found out ! No matter what they did to him, he had got his revenge ! He'd show 'em ! He gloated over the thought of that car-load of bunker-coal pouring into the bowels of the *Gargantuan*, visualized, with an unholy glee the more satisfying in that it was perforce secret, the great liner throbbing on her course, her thousands of unconscious passengers at ease on her multitudinous decks, serenely superior to the ordinary perils of the sea, until that inevitable moment when an unsuspecting stoker—he loathed stokers and stokeholds with a fierce and personal hatred—hurled *the* shovelful of coal on to her furnace fires.

Absorbed in this vision, he had scarcely heard the charge as it was read over to him. It concerned something very remote from him—he had almost forgotten that warehouse in Glasgow—the real, vital thing for which he was responsible was hidden from these blind fools. He exulted childishly. And *they'd never know !*—for once he was certain



"He stood paralyzed in an awful terror, yet impelled, almost beyond restraint, to shriek a protest."

of immunity in his war against an unsympathetic world, for once he'd done 'em! He felt savagely contemptuous of the stolid policeman who gave evidence of arrest.

Then one of the plain-clothes men stood up in the court, addressed himself to the magistrate. What was he saying?

. . . we should be obliged if you would make an order without adjournment of this case. We hold a warrant for the extradition of the accused." He passed it up to the magistrate. "His presence in England is urgently required for trial with his confederates already arrested. We have retained a passage for him on the *Gargantuan*, which sails to-morrow morning."

The *Gargantuan!* The name, a cymbal-clash of significance, awoke him with a shock at the heart to full realization of the detective's matter-of-fact request. The *Gargantuan!* Upon the moment he stood paralyzed in an awful terror, sweat pearling upon him, his tongue dry in his mouth, yet impelled, almost beyond restraint, to shriek a protest. No! No!—not the *Gargantuan!* He jerked a wild, eye-dilated glance around him, as though in a dread of visible appearance of the supernatural. The irony which condemned him to his own destruction was nothing less than this to his primitive mind. He gasped for his only sound.

SITTING alone down there in that bare cabin in the depths of the ship, his hands worked convulsively in repetition of his tense clutch upon the balustrade of the dock as he lived through the scene again—saw once more the magistrate nod his calm acquiescence.

Shriek out a warning? Would they believe him? He knew only too well that they would not. He had no proof—only his word, the word of a man obviously eager to postpone the processes of the law. Would the shipping company hold up the great liner, throw perhaps a hundred thousand dollars' worth of coal into the sea in despair of identifying the fatal lump, upon his mere assertion? He knew that they would not. The most they would do would be sceptically to warn the firemen of the ship to keep a sharp look-out for any suspicious block of coal—and he could well appraise, none better, the futility of such casual inspection. And even if they listened—even if, improbably, he dodged the voyage of the *Gargantuan*—he would be assuredly shot or stabbed later on for his betrayal. He knew the "comrades." Either way he was in a trap.

And now here he was—he came back to himself after this half-dreaming recapitulation of the episodes leading up to his present situation—shut up in the depths of the great liner throbbing her way, with a powerful, steady whirring of her turbine engines, into the immensity of the ocean. Down below—in those hellish stokeholds—the half-naked firemen were shovelling the coal into the white-hot glare of her furnaces, shovelling and again shovelling until at last one lump that left their shovels for its fiery bed—he jumped to his feet again in a shriek of terror, banged against the door with frenzied fists.

He went mad, felt himself going more and more mad, flung himself at that locked door in a whirlwind of blind, wild energies that swept through him as from a source beyond him. Voice, feet, and fists clamoured for release from this trap as, like a caged wild animal overmastered by its instincts, he hurled himself again and again against that door which would not open. For all response, he might have been alone in a world destitute of man. His blows ceased suddenly, he sank down, his brain drugged in the stupefaction of an immense fatigue.

He slept, while that gloomy little cell about him, deep down in the mighty organism, quivered with the rush of the great liner as she hurried out to sea.

How long Jake Bravinsky lay in blessed unconsciousness at the foot of that door he did not know. He was awakened by its opening, by a sudden glare as the electric-light was switched on. One of the detectives stood over him, accompanying a steward who brought food.

With dulled faculties that fumbled for definition of the vague terror he knew to be somewhere in the back of his mind—what was it?—he rose stiffly to his feet, tottered to his bunk. Then, seated, he looked up at the detective and remembered. His teeth chattered in the shiver which came over him. His lips parted as if for sudden utterance, but he could only stare dumbly. What use was it?—his brain began to work again—even if they turned round now the very next shovelful of coal might—he balked at exact imagination of the cataclysm.

His deep-lying, bitter hatred of the law and its representatives surged up in him suddenly, presented to him doubtless by his subconscious self for solace, blotting out all else. Anyway, they were all in the same boat! They'd all go up, all drown, together—no warning, no chance to summon help by wireless! He almost chuckled as he thought of that stolidly superior detective dead—dead and unsuspecting until the moment. They'd all go like that, the——! He grouped them, all of them, everybody that was not himself, in an ugly word for justification of his enmity.

After a glance around the cabin, a test of the screwed-tight porthole, the detective motioned out the steward.

"Not so much of that noise, now!" he said, standing over his prisoner. "Or we'll tie you up and gag you for the rest of the trip—you understand?" There was genuine menace in his tone. The weedy little wretch shrank back from him instinctively, the blood of two generations of gutter-thieves asserting itself in this close proximity to law personified. His bloodless lips quivered, but he made no sound.

After one last nod of significance, the detective left him to his food, turned the key once more upon him.

The first mouthful nearly choked him, but then, hunger awaking at the taste, he ate ravenously, was still unsatisfied when all was finished.

He sat crouched upon the edge of his bunk, staring vacantly at the door, his mind fixed upon the continuance of that faintly-heard humming of the turbines, of that quivering vibration which pervaded the ship. The whirl of that machinery which drove them unflaggingly onward, which might at any moment cease, held him fascinated. At each moment he expected the all-shaking roar. His brain worked feverishly, as with an independent will, placing before him again and again pictures that he could not banish—the uprush of a sheet of flame, the headlong plunge beneath waves dotted with human heads of the great liner, decks ripped open and funnels awry—himself in the cabin clinging to the bunk as she sank sickeningly in utter darkness. Again and again these pictures came before him, in a merciless repetition, curiously exterior to himself, as though he stared at a maddening reiteration of the self-same scenes upon the screen of a cinematograph—in his head the whirring, identical with the whirring of the turbines, of the machine that would not stop.

At length he sank into an uneasy sleep, to be awakened from a nightmare where he was clutched by nameless things by the two detectives standing over him.

"Time for exercise, Jake," said one of them, as the prisoner stared blankly into his face.

He roused himself stupidly, grasping only two outstanding facts. He was still alive. That infernal whirring in his head had stopped.

The three of them passed out of the cabin into the long corridor, tenanted only by cleaners and an occasional hurrying steward, climbed stairways and again stairways, and finally emerged into the damp early-morning chill of the open air. They passed aft to the steerage deck, where a few sailors were busy with hose and swabs. No other passengers had yet made their appearance.

His terror woke alive again in the wretched prisoner as, between his captors, he walked up and down that deck at a pace which they dictated to him. In his sleep down below there, the menace to his existence, although ever at the back of his consciousness, had lost actuality—seemed unbelievable when he awoke. Up here, on the deck of the great ship, whose white superstructure lifted and sank against the greys of a stormy sky, her shrouds moaning in the cold wind, which smote him like a douche, he was brought sharply back to contact with reality. It *was* real—terribly real—this ship solitary upon the vast ocean where great waves rolled with foaming whitenesses under the torn clouds of an incipient gale. Even her immensity dipped to their turbulence.

THE gale grew worse as the day wore on. Even Jake Bravinsky, immured in his steel cell far below decks, could tell that its violence increased from hour to hour. The loose fittings of the cabin jangled and rang in the staggering impact of the ship into the great waves which smote her at brief and almost regular intervals. The streaming glass disc of the port rose disturbingly towards a zenith which flooded the confined space with a cold grey light, and fell back again through a long arc to souse itself in green waters and a temporary gloom. Though he could see nothing, the panic-gripped wretch crouched upon his bunk could imagine the totality of the scene.

His hyperexcited mental activity began to find new channels for itself. He found himself speculating—unable to stop speculating, a new form of torment reeled out by that ceaselessly whirring machine in his head—on the nature of the explosion when it should occur. Would he hear it in this part of the ship? He remembered, in newspaper accounts of torpedoings during the war, the statements of passengers in big liners who had heard nothing, felt only a slight shock, when the ship's side was blown in. That diabolical little German-Jew's infernal machine would explode deep down in the very centre of the vessel—"blow de belly out of her"; the forecast rang in his ears. What sound would come to him here? A mighty roar, rending her vitals, flinging everyone prostrate, or——?

What was that? His heart stopped in recognition of a far-away, muffled shock. He listened, his senses strained to an intense acuteness. What was that dull shock, deep down in the ship? His scream rang, strange and terrifying, in his ears, unconscious as he was that he had uttered it. He started from his bunk, clutched at the edge of it with claw-like, rigid fingers, sweat pearling upon his forehead, as he steadied himself upon the sloping floor that listed away under him and

came not back. He listened, ears at strain for the slightest sound. There was a strange hush, an utter absence of the vibration so long continued. *The engines had stopped!*

At last! It was the explosion. He had no doubt of it. A breathless terror swept over him, denying utterance to the flood of wild blasphemy which rose in him like an inversion of agonized prayer. Mingled with it was a great relief. The whirring of that infernal machine in his head had stopped. He could think now, think with a rapid lucidity that amazed him. His mind, miraculously alert, took in all the implications of his position, while yet he clung to the bunk, speechless and incapable of movement.

Would anyone come to let him out? There was a rapid scurry of feet along the corridor. It passed, ceased definitely. Then, in heart-stopping confirmation of his fear, the light in the corridor went out suddenly. He stood, clutching at his bunk, in an absolute darkness that enveloped him almost tangibly. He let go of the bunk in a dash for where he knew the door to be, slipped, with a sharp stab of accentuated terror, upon a wet floor sloping permanently at an acute angle, despite its slow rise and its seemingly endless subsequent subsidence. He crawled upwards on it, knocked his head against the door, pulled himself upright with a grasp upon its handle. Then, in a sudden access, he found his voice. He shrieked—piercingly, shriek upon shriek that rang through an appalling silence—shrieked like a maniac forgotten in his cell.

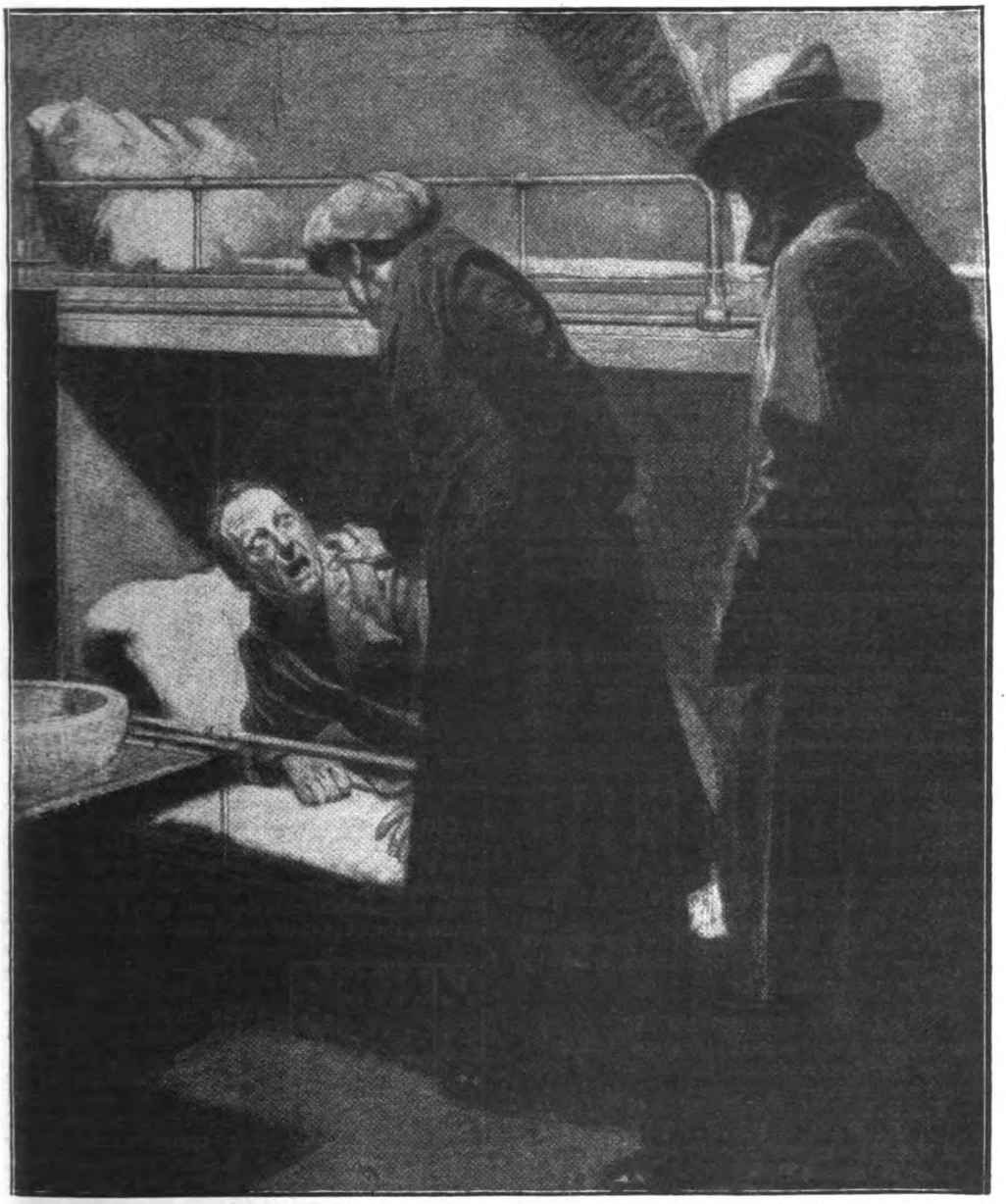
NONE came to answer him. There was no sound in the corridor outside. The frenzied man huddled there in the darkness against the wall wet with water from the leaking port had no doubt of it. *He knew.* That infernal chunk of coal had done its work only too well. Paralyzed for any movement, his imagination worked feverishly, and yet, in that complete dark, could form no definite mental images. To his horror, that terrifying machine in his head had started again—beyond his control. It was like being in a darkened movie-hall where the still whirring machine could only project flitting and fragmentary pictures from a torn film in the intervals of frequent " black-outs " upon the screen. But still the machine went on maddeningly—the more maddening because somehow the machine was part of himself. The mental photograph of a sinking derelict he had once seen recurred over and over again in that patchy sequence—the hulk sagging in the seas which lapped over her, higher and imperceptibly higher—the decks awash, waves licking the canvas of her bridge—and then the silent, sudden engulfment, disappearance.

Were *they* still afloat, upon the surface? He dared not give himself the answer. Even though they had sunk beneath the wave-tops, he remembered—all scraps of apposite knowledge that he had ever picked up coming to him with a memory preternaturally acute—that great ships like the *Gargantuan*, if their bulkheads were closed, did not drop like a stone to the bottom of the sea, but remained, swung as it were at an intermediate depth, in a slow and gradual subsidence as one compartment after another was burst into by the pressure of the water.

Then, in that pitch blackness, the ship gave a heavy lurch, lifted once more as with difficulty, subsided in a long roll that threw him against the wall. The floor seemed to sink endlessly beneath him. He clawed himself partially upright and shrieked, with his last breath, curses—curses—curses—upon Rosa Bauermann, upon the " comrades," upon that diabolical little German-Jew. Yes, she was going now—going finally. He shrieked once more in that awful, oppressive blackness, shrieked, his ears singing, that infernal machine in his head—behind the eyes that could not see—whirring madly to a climax, shrieked with his heart seeming to burst his breast, shrieked—there was a mighty crash somewhere. The last bulkhead! He essayed one more shriek that was soundless, would not come beyond a gurgle, put his hands blindly to his face, felt them, with a feeble wonderment, wet with a warm fluid from his mouth, reeled dizzily upon that sloping floor. Ah! at last, thank Gawd! thank Gawd!—there were lights, lights!—flashes and stars of dancing light! He pitched, head foremost, into a gulf of blackness.

AS dawn broke, the ss. *Gargantuan*, crippled by a couple of smashed propeller-shafts, and afflicted with a heavy list to port that caused her captain to analyse expletively the ineptitude of an amateur stevedore gang at stowing cargo, was picked up by a large freighter with a nose for salvage. Her passengers, who had whiled away the anxious hours by singing hymns or playing poker, according to their various tastes, had all of them long ago forgotten the temporary inconvenience caused them by a ten minutes' breakdown of the electric-lighting dynamos at the critical moment.

A few hours later the ship's doctor wrote out, for the behoof of two exasperated detectives, a technically exact certificate of the death of Jake Bravinsky from natural causes. " Burst blood-vessel," he



"He sank into an uneasy sleep, to be awakened by the two detectives standing over him."

interpreted laconically, as they scratched their heads over his text-book diagnosis.

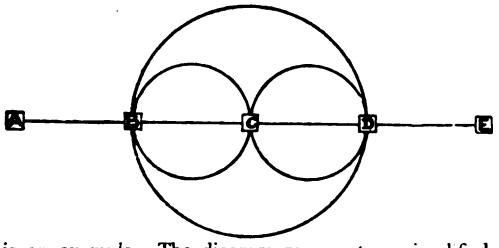
ABOUT the same time the American manager of the shipping company was dictating a letter to the harbour authorities wherein he expressed himself as highly dissatisfied with their attitude in regard to freight car No. 34,518, laden with bunker-coal for the ss. *Gargantuan,* and hurled into the dock by a mob of infuriated strikers the night before the ship sailed.

If the spirits of the departed can revisit this earthly sphere, it is pleasant to think that possibly around that irate manager hovered the equally irate but impotent shade of Jake Bravinsky, frightened out of existence under false pretences.

PERPLEXITIES. By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

558.—RAILWAY ROUTES.

AN important use of good puzzles is that they often teach us that a problem, otherwise impossible of solution, may be mastered by devising some ingenious method of attack adapted to the particular case. Here



is an example. The diagram represents a simplified railway system, and I want to know how many different ways there are of going from A to E, if I never go twice along the same line in any journey. This is a very simple proposition, but practically impossible of solution until you have hit on some method of recording the routes. You see, there are many ways of going, from the short route A B D E, taking one of the large loops, up to the long route A B C D B C D B C D E, which takes you over every line on the system and can itself be varied in order in many ways. Now, how many different ways of going are there?

559.—FOOTBALL RESULTS.

NEAR the close of the last football season a correspondent, J. G., informed me that when he was returning from Glasgow after the international match between Scotland and England the following table caught his eye in a newspaper :—

	Played.	Won.	Lost.	Drawn.	Goals. For.	Goals. Against	Points.
Scotland..	3	3	0	0	7	1	6
England..	3	1	1	1	2	3	3
Wales ..	3	1	1	1	3	3	3
Ireland ..	3	0	3	0	1	6	0

As he knew, of course, that Scotland had beaten England by 3—0, it struck him that it might be possible to find the scores in the other five matches from the table. In this he succeeded. Can you discover from it how many goals were won, drawn, or lost by each side in every match?

560.—THE MISSING VOWEL.

WE all know the old puzzle of the alleged inscription over the Ten Commandments on the wall of some religious institution :—

P.RS.V.R.Y.P.RF.CTM.N.V.R
K..PTH.S.PR.C.PTST.N

Which is read by interpolating the vowel E at every dot, when it becomes PERSEVERE YE PERFECT MEN: EVER KEEP THESE PRECEPTS TEN. But can you make sense of the following by introducing one and the same vowel wherever required?

R T H D X X F R D D N S D N T K N W L D P
R T F R M L G W D.

561.—ARMY FIGURES.

A CERTAIN division in an army was composed of a little over 20,000 men, made up of five brigades. It was known that one-third of the first brigade, two-sevenths of the second brigade, seven-twelfths of the third, nine-thirteenths of the fourth, and fifteen-twenty-seconds of the fifth brigade happened in every case to be the same number of men. Can you discover how many men there were in every brigade?

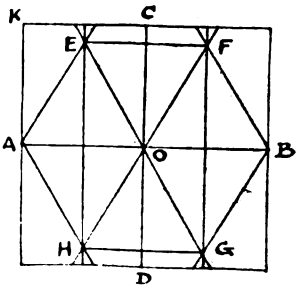
562.—SOME ANAGRAMS.

1.—Mind, a rat is on it.
2.—A cute call.
3.—'Tis gin tea.
4.—O, Ma, Pa ran.
5.—Dan ties it on.
6.—No car! Let me go!
7.—Ma kept a lion.
8.—Meat is on it.
9.—No tool is right.
10.—Let man love.

Make one word from the letters in each line.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

554.—PAPER FOLDING.



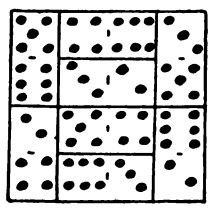
FOLD through the mid points of the opposite sides and get the lines A O B and C O D. Also fold E H and F G, bisecting A O and O B. Turn over A K so that K lies on the line E H, at the point E, and then fold A E and E O G. Similarly find H and fold A H and H O F. Now fold B F, B G, E F and H G, and E F B G H A E is the regular hexagon required.

555.—THE FOUR FOURS

THE four solutions are as follows :—

442) 1068314 (2417
444) 1072704 (2416
943) 1337174 (1418
949) 1343784 (1416

From an inspection we can prove that the divisor must exceed 249, that it cannot exceed 500 unless the first and third figures in quotient be 1, that the product of the last figure in divisor and quotient must have a 4 in the digits place, etc. Then the number of trials to be actually made is small, if you use thought and judgment. For example, if you have placed a 4 in the second place of divisor and 1 in third place of quotient, the 4 in the sixth line must obviously appear.



556.—THE EIGHT DOMINOES.

THE illustration shows the correct solution, with pips adding up to 66, the highest possible. If, after placing the four sixes, you are tempted to place four fives, you cannot then complete the square with fours, threes, and twos, but will have to use two ones. You will thus get only 64 pips, instead of 66.

557.—ODDS AND EVENS.

IF the result given is odd the even number is in the right hand; if even, the odd number is in the right hand. An even number multiplied by either an odd or even number will produce an even number. An odd number multiplied by an odd number will alone produce odd. And if the result given is even both products added must be even; if the result is odd, one product is even and the other odd. The former result can only happen when the even number is multiplied by the 7; the latter when the odd number is multiplied by 7.

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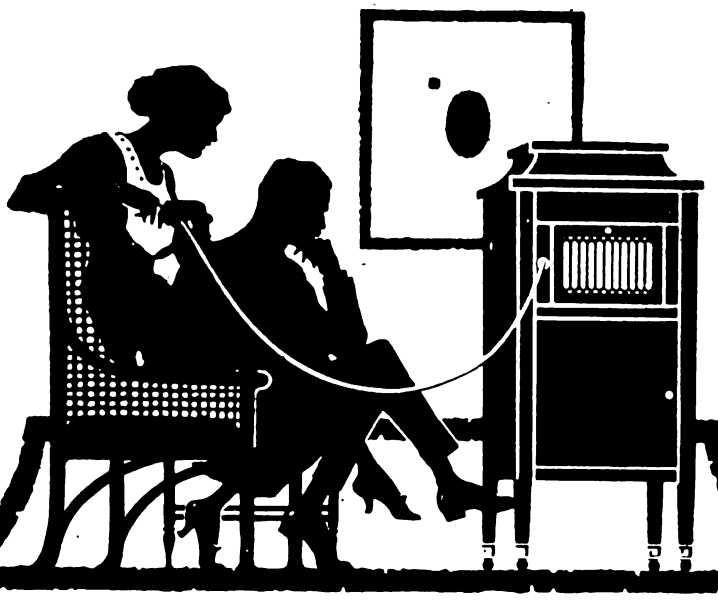

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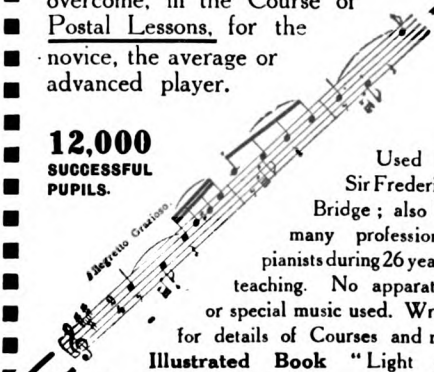

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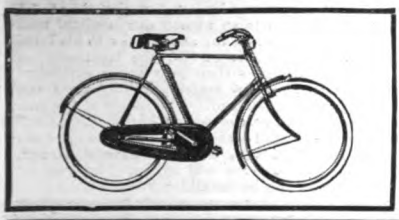

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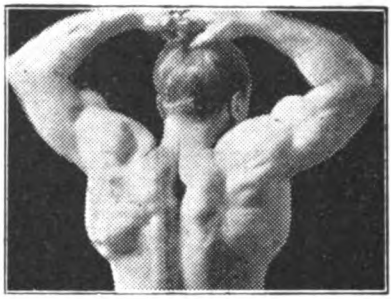
STRAND MAGAZINE, *July*, 1921.

Another Amazing Result of a Course of MAXALDING

The Story of Case B. 12706 is briefly told here in picture and text, without comment or embellishment.

At the beginning of treatment on July the 25th, 1919. —Condition : Heart dilatation. Great exhaustion and weakness. Measurements: Weight, 9st. 4lb. Height, 5ft. 1in. Neck, 12½in. Chest (expanded), 36in. Waist, 30in. Forearm, 8½in. Biceps, 10in. Triceps, 9in. Thighs, 18in. Calves, 12½in.



At the conclusion of treatment on October the 22nd, 1919. — Condition : Heart normal. Lungs perfect. Health splendid. Measurements : Weight, 10st. 7lb. Height, 5ft. 1¼in. Neck, 15in. Chest (expanded), 41¼in. Waist, 32in. Forearm, 10in. Biceps, 13in. Triceps, 11in. Thighs, 23in Calves, 14in.

The Three Branches of MAXALDING are :

THE CURATIVE TREATMENT, which eradicates Functional Disorders and strengthens the heart, lungs, and other internal organs.

THE HEALTH COURSE, for men and women who are organically sound, but lack nervous energy, and desire to be absolutely fit. Also for those who desire to be as bright mentally and as beautiful physically as Nature intended them to be.

THE GREAT STRENGTH COURSE, prepared for men who desire a very fine development and man's crowning Glory—Great Strength.

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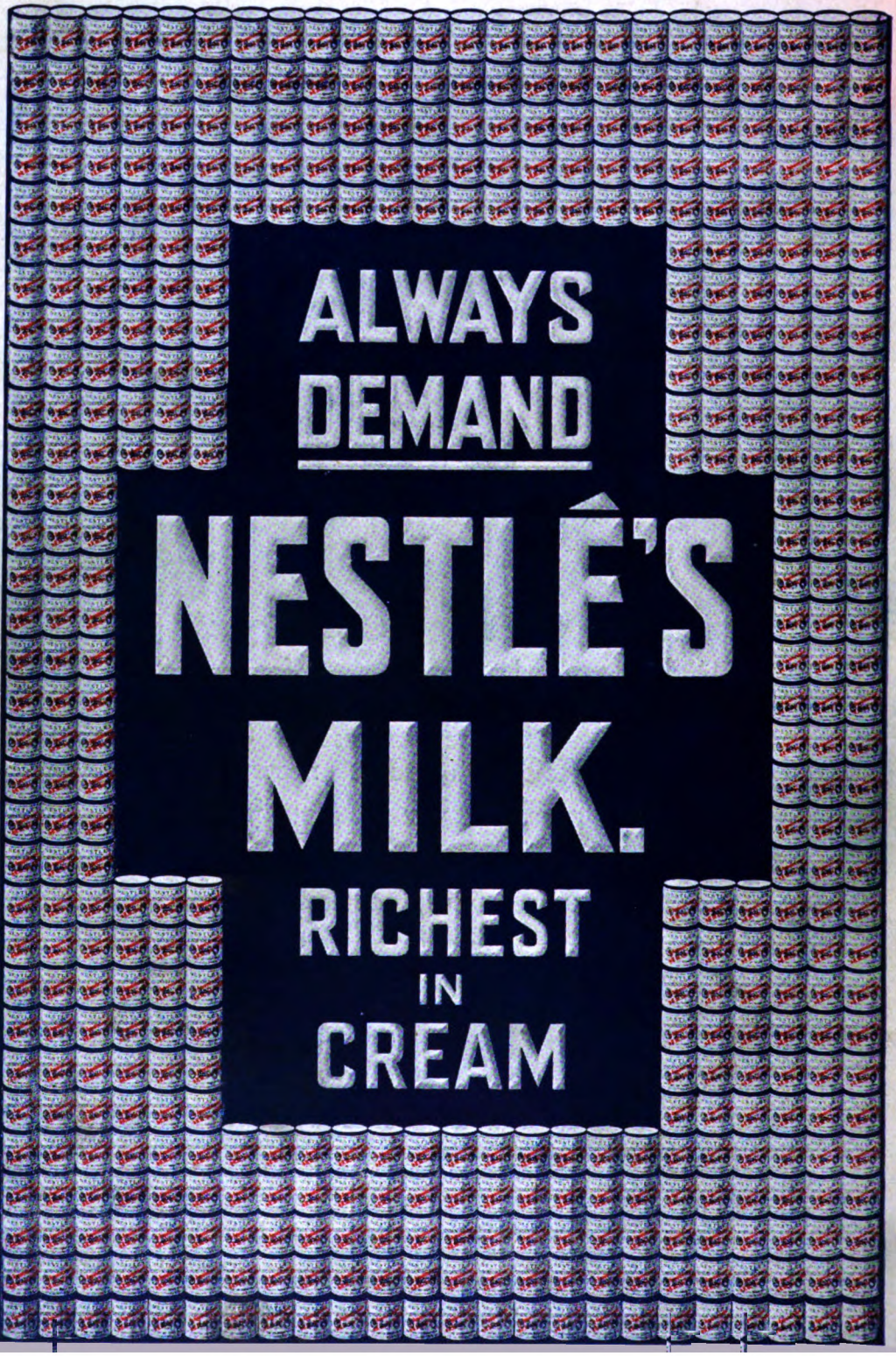
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August, 1921.

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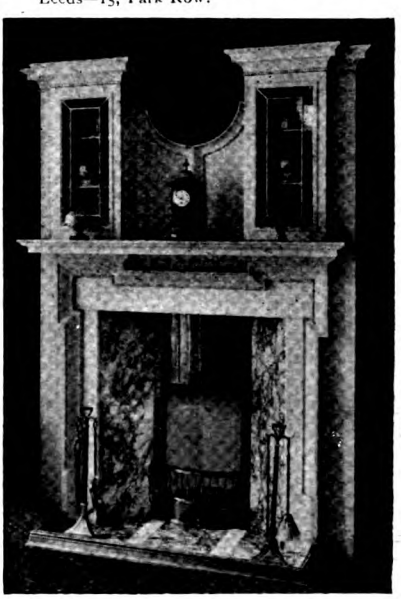

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15/6
Post Free.

Queens' babies have been tucked up in Otterburn Rugs —the product of a Northumbrian Village Industry. Otterburn Rugs were first made just a century ago, long before substitutes for wool were sought or used; and to-day, although the Otterburn demand has greatly outpaced the little old Mill's output at Otterburn, these Rugs are just as honestly and carefully made, from the finest selected fleeces of Cheviot Wool, as when they were first woven on the original hand-looms at Otterburn Village, away up near the Border.

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The above is an actual photograph of the Otterburn Baby-Rug; suitable for Pram, Cot, Cradle, or as a Nursing-Wrap.

30" x 36", fringed at ends. Colours: Grey, Cream, Sky, Saxe, Rose, Navy, and Biscuit. Will wash, and wash, and improve with washing. Price 15/6

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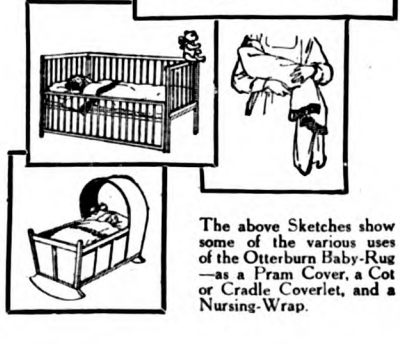

The above Sketches show some of the various uses of the Otterburn Baby-Rug —as a Pram Cover, a Cot or Cradle Coverlet, and a Nursing-Wrap.

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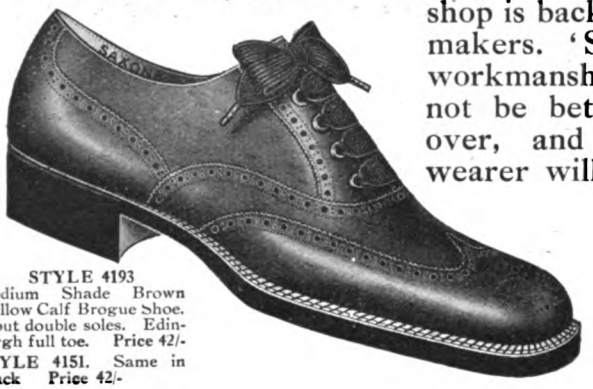
THE important thing to remember when buying shoes is that it is infinitely preferable to purchase those which are branded and priced by manufacturers owning their own shops. The 'Saxone' Stores cover the whole country; every pair of 'Saxone' Shoes in every single shop is backed by the actual makers. 'Saxone' material, workmanship and finish cannot be bettered the world over, and any 'Saxone' wearer will confirm this.



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Cream *and* **Face Powder**

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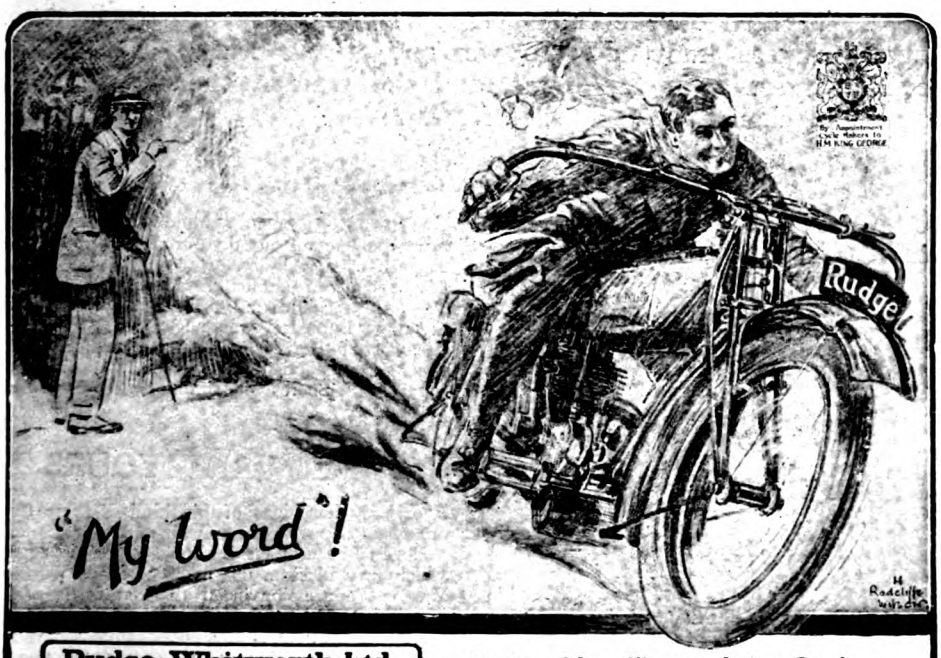

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No Entrance Fee

WE WANT YOURS

Everybody has ideas of this kind at some time or other—a happy phrase which may become the "slogan" of a great business, a rough suggestion which may blossom out as a poster of world-wide fame. We are convinced that hundreds of good ideas are wasted for lack of opportunity to utilize them. Well, here is the opportunity. If you have an idea or suggestion of any kind which you think may be of any use to any of the advertisers in any of the Newnes publications, SEND IT IN.

AN EQUAL CHANCE FOR ALL

WHAT TO DO

Look through the advertisement pages of this magazine; select any advertisement you like, see if you can get a new "idea" for advertising the same article—or an improvement on the advertisement. Try to pick out the essential points which the advertiser is trying to convey; then see whether you can present them in more novel or striking manner. Apply this test to several advertisements and you will soon find suggestions coming to you—a phrase, a suggestion for a picture, or an *idea* for a picture.

WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR IDEA, sketch it out, or describe it in a few words as plainly as possible, attach the coupon, and send in as directed in the Rules. Remember that it does not matter whether your sketch is good or bad, from an art point of view, or whether your idea is described in polished phrases or not. It is the *Idea*, and the idea alone, that will count.

All Ideas sent in will first be submitted to a committee of advertisement experts. It will be their business to utilize and carry out your ideas in proper form. They may be sent in crude or imperfect. In this way any lack of technical knowledge on the part of the competitor will be made good, and the Final Judges will have only the *merit* of the idea itself to consider.

THE FINAL JUDGES

When the ideas have been thus "laid out" equally effectively from a technical point of view, they will be submitted to the Final Judges, who will then decide upon their relative merits *as ideas*, and award the prizes accordingly. The following gentlemen, all of whom are well known in the advertising world, have kindly consented to act in this capacity:—

Sir FRANK NEWNES, Bart.
The Right Hon. LORD RIDDELL.
H. GREENHOUGH SMITH,
Editor "Strand Magazine."
GALLOWAY FRASER,
Editor "Tit-Bits."

You can take your Idea from any Advertisement appearing in any of the Newnes Publications published during the months of MAY, JUNE, JULY, *and* AUGUST, 1921.

STRAND MAGAZINE
TIT-BITS
JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY
LADIES' FIELD
The HOME MAGAZINE
THE WIDE WORLD
The GRAND MAGAZINE
OUR HOMES AND GARDENS
WOMAN'S LIFE
THE CAPTAIN
Leach's LADY'S COMPANION
" NEWEST FASHIONS
" CHILDREN'S FASHIONS

READ THESE RULES.

1.—All entries which do not conform to these conditions will be disqualified.

2.—All Ideas submitted must apply to one of the commodities advertised in this or any other of the Newnes publications (see list below).

3.—Competitors may submit as many Ideas as they choose, but each separate Idea must be accompanied by a coupon cut from the publication in which appears the advertisement to which the Idea refers.

4.—All Ideas to which prizes are awarded become the absolute property of GEORGE NEWNES, LTD.

5.—No Ideas can be returned, but any unsuccessful entries which appear to possess merit may be submitted to advertisers, and, if used, paid for by arrangement.

6.—The Judges' decision must be accepted by all competitors as absolutely final, and no correspondence can be entered into.

Entries should be addressed to THE COMPETITION EDITOR, GEORGE NEWNES, LTD., 8, Southampton St., Strand, W.C.2, and the envelope marked "IDEAS" in the bottom left-hand corner. THEY MUST BE RECEIVED NOT LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30, 1921.

DON'T CONFINE YOUR EFFORTS TO THIS MAGAZINE. LOOK THROUGH THE OTHER PAPERS MENTIONED ABOVE. SEND AS MANY EFFORTS AS YOU LIKE.

Now Brush Teeth

In the new way—Remove the film

All statements approved by authorities.

Try this new way of teeth cleaning. The test is free. It has brought to millions whiter, cleaner teeth. Leading dentists everywhere advise it. See the results, then learn what they mean to you.

What the film may do

There is on your teeth a viscous film. You can feel it—that viscous coat. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and remains. It is now regarded as a potential source of most tooth troubles.

It is this film-coat that discolors—not the teeth. Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth and the acid may cause decay.

Brushed in the usual way, much of that film is left. And very few people have escaped the effects of it.

Now we combat it

Dental science has in late years found a way to fight film, day by day. High authorities have proved it by many careful tests.

Millions of people have adopted it, largely by dental advice. To careful people it is bringing a new era in teeth cleaning.

These new methods are all embodied in a dentifrice called Pepsodent. And you are urged to prove it by a pleasant ten-day test.

Five important effects

Pepsodent has five effects, all of them essential to cleaner, whiter teeth. One ingredient is pepsin. One multiplies the starch digestant in the saliva to combat starch deposits that cling. One multiplies the alkalinity of the saliva to neutralise mouth acids.

In two ways it attacks the film directly. Then it keeps the teeth so highly polished that film cannot easily cling.

It differs vastly from the old-time tooth-pastes, which dentists now know were wrong.

Send the coupon for a 10-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coat disappears.

Within a week you will know that your teeth are protected as they never were before. And you will always want your teeth to look and feel like that. Cut out the coupon now.

Pepsodent MARK TRADE

The Modern Dentifrice

A scientific film combatant, combined with two other modern requisites. Now advised by leading dentists and supplied in large tubes by all druggists.

10-Day Tube Free 482

THE PEPSODENT COMPANY,
Dept. 131, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.1.
Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to

.....

.....

.....

Only one Tube to a family.

STRAND M/Aug.

The Story of Nature's Bulk Storage—No. 4.

The Great Ice Age

STARK dim days when Primitive Man looked down from his nest in the trees, and beheld the creeping, glittering paralysis—Ice. Gradually it crept over the surface of the earth—grinding, crushing! Compressing the rocks and the riches that were to be man's inheritance. Gold—Ore—***Petroleum*** All safely locked in "Bulk Storage" till he learned to make proper use of them.

Then as man came into his own, the ice receded. Nature opened the doors of her storehouse, and bade him seek and find.

To-day the wonders wrought by the finding and refining of Petroleum are countless. Over land, in the air, over the sea and under the sea, the power of petrol obeys the will of modern man.

Think of the romance contained in

PRATT'S
'PERFECTION' SPIRIT

From the Golden Pump. *In the Green Can.*

ANGLO-AMERICAN OIL CO., LTD.,
Head Office: 36, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1. Branches & Depots everywhere.

Player's
"COUNTRY LIFE"
Tobacco & Cigarettes
"AT NOONDAY"
after
Stanhope A. Forbes, R.A.
P908
ISSUED BY THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO Co (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD

Holidays.

The two are very still and quiet watching for the tug at the line, and find this just the time for the keenest enjoyment of Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe.

Sold by Confectioners everywhere in 4-lb. Family Tins, Small Tins, and loose by weight.

Every bit as good is Egg and Cream Toffee-de-Luxe and Chocolate Toffee-de-Luxe.

Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe has the largest sale in the world.

MACKINTOSH'S
Toffee-de-Luxe

℗ P4

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.

THIS WRECK

LEAVES YOU LIKE THIS

AND IS RETURNED LIKE NEW

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **10/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

Upstairs & Downstairs

The thorough way of house-cleaning the easy, yet best way is to use —

RONUK SANITARY POLISH

with a RONUK HOME POLISHER —— reaches everywhere from anywhere ——

Write for illustrated booklet

RONUK POLISHES obtainable in tins everywhere.

RONUK HOME POLISHER Price 7/6

RONUK LTD. PORTSLADE, SUSSEX.

Increase your Salary by Spare Time Study.

YOU may have to work many hours a day—I.C.S. Courses are prepared especially to meet the requirements of busy people. No matter in what line of work you may be engaged, a course of training with the I.C.S. will qualify you for a better position with higher pay. Moderate inclusive fees ; easy terms of payment.

POST THE COUPON TO-DAY!

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS, LTD.,
16, International Buildings, Kingsway, W.C.2.

Please send me your free book containing full particulars of the Course of Correspondence Training before which I have marked X.

..Mining	..Steam	..Advertising
..Mechanical	..Boiler	..Window Dressing
..Draughtsmanship	..Agriculture	..Chemistry
..Shipyard Ditto	..Poultry Farming	..Textiles [graphy
..Electrical	..Civil Engineering	..Wireless Tele-
..Building	..Business Training	..Woodworking
..Marine	..Secretaryship	..Furniture
..Motors	..Salesmanship	..Fruit Farming

..Professional Examinations

NOTE —If the subject desired is not in above list, write it here :—

.....

Name .....

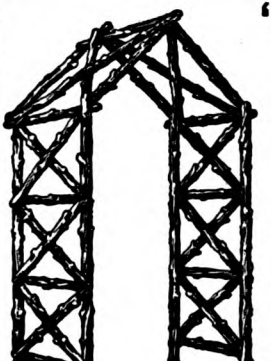
Address .....

All Prospective Campers

should send 3d. to Lightweight Tent Co. (Dept. S.), 61, High Holborn, London, for all lists. Cycle, Motor, Pedestrian (easily carried), Garden, Bathing Tents, Portable Light Baths and Hammock Beds a speciality. Tents as supplied to Officers of the 1st and 2nd Life Guards for Active Service. Our Outfits are a proved success all over the world.

Double Roof Colonial Tents Special

All our goods are worthy of attention.



"ADMIRED BY ALL."

Wonderful Value in

ARTISTIC GARDEN ARCHES

FROM 5/- EACH.

Send to-day for our Catalogue, post free,

E. J. PREECE, 264, Caerleon Rd., NEWPORT, MON.

There are no more Realistic Reproductions of Genuine Pearls than Ciro Pearls

Other scientific pearls are sometimes bought in the belief that because they are more expensive than Ciro's they must be better. The error of this is evident as soon as you compare a Ciro and a real pearl necklet, for what better quality can you have than a necklet so realistic in appearance as to be indistinguishable from the genuine? It is illogical, therefore, and uneconomical to pay more than Ciro prices for an article that cannot possibly look more real or wear better.

To demonstrate most convincingly the truth of the foregoing statement

We will give £500 to any Charitable Institution

if any artificial pearls (no matter what their cost) can be shown to us which prove, on expert opinion, to be more realistic reproductions of the genuine pearl than Ciro's.

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea we will send you a Necklet of Ciro Pearls, 16in. long, or a Ring, Brooch, Ear-rings or any other Jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls (complete with case). If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within seven days and we will refund your money. Other lengths at proportionate rates—Gold clasps 2/6 extra. Descriptive Booklet No. 12, containing illustrations of all Ciro Pearl jewellery, sent post free.

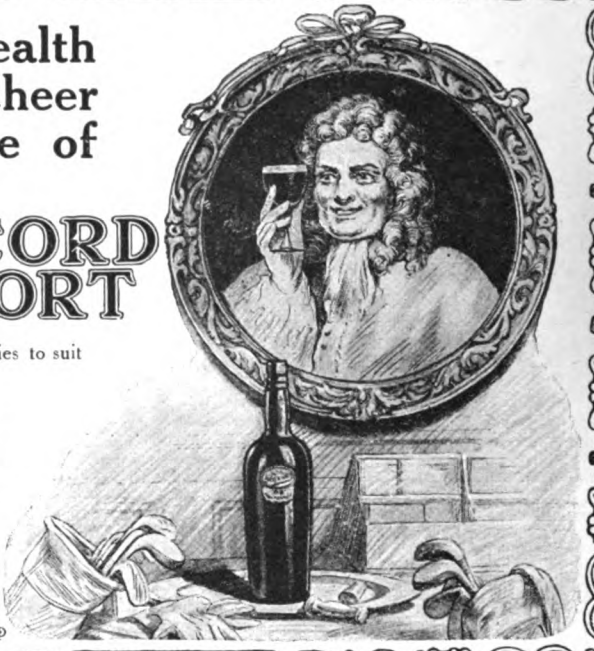
Ciro Pearls LTD.

(Dept. 12), 39, Old Bond St., London, W.1. (Piccadilly End).

Our Showrooms are on the first floor over Lloyds Bank.

There's health and good cheer in a bottle of

CONCORD PORT



Supplied in different qualities to suit all tastes :—

V.O.P. Fine old tawny. Price 7/6 per bottle.

MAXIME. Superb old tawny, great age. Price 8/6 per bottle.

VINTAGE. Of the famous years 1884, 1887, 1896 and 1900.

If difficulty is experienced in obtaining supplies, please communicate with
Messrs. W. H. CHAPLIN & Co., Ltd., 48, Mark Lane, London, E.C.3.

HARBUTT'S

Nov-Lart

The Art of Stencil Picture Making.

A fascinating and easy pastime for all.

MAKE your own Birthday Cards, Christmas Cards, Calendars, and other items for which all sorts of uses may be found.

NOV-LART PICTURES FETCH GOOD PRICES AT BAZAARS AND SALES OF WORK.

HARBUTT'S PLASTICINE, Ltd.,
3, BATHAMPTON, BATH.
London Show Rooms: 56, Ludgate Hill, E.C.4.

FREE
BIG CATALOGUE OF MONEY SAVING CHINA BARGAINS
HUNDREDS OF DESIGNS SHEWN IN ACTUAL COLORS FOR ALL BUYERS
FREE GIFTS

HOUSEHOLD and Private Orders our **SPECIALITY.** Splendid Bargains in China, Pottery, and Glass. Tea Sets from **11/3.** Dinner Sets from **38/9.** Toilet Sets from **16/9.** Complete Home Outfits from **57/6.** **CATERING CROCKERY A SPECIALITY,** as supplied to "Daily Mail." Outfits for 50 Persons from **75/-.**

SPECIAL UNBREAKABLE QUALITY
China for Kitchen, Camp, Barrack, Hospital Use.

ONLY 28/9 **PACKED FREE**

This beautiful Tea Service, 12 persons, in charming Festoon design and Gold Finish. Splendid Quality. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Tea Service, 6 persons, **18/3.** Dinner Service, **39/3.**
The Leading Pottery Mail Order Merchants. Established 1903.
Over 50,000 Customers: Full Value and Satisfaction Guaranteed.
Send Postcard To-day for Complete ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE **FREE**
One Hundred Designs shown in Actual Colours.

CENTURY POTTERY Coy
ADVT. 8.M.7. SURSLEM. STAFFS.

FIRST-CLASS LIBRARY, "*AQUITANIA*," decorated with "SATINETTE."

Deydol Distemper instead of Wall-paper is a splendid investment, and **Cripon Supervar** on surfaces requiring varnishing is unsurpassed for fine appearance and durability.

All good class Decorators will use the above materials at your request.

Satinette
TRADE MARK

ENAMEL PAINT

THE MOST ATTRACTIVE AND ENDURING OF ALL MODERN DECORATIVE "FINISHES"

ENJOY the charm of good decoration—have the work done now, for delay only means greater expense. See your Decorator to-day. Ask him for an estimate and tell him that you want SATINETTE as the final coat on all doors, skirtings, mouldings, window frames, etc. You then ensure a surface as beautiful and durable as porcelain tiling.

SATINETTE is unequalled for decorating Cottage, Villa or Mansion—its lovely effect is a daily source of pleasure and comfort—and you have the satisfaction of knowing that this is coupled with sound economy—for at the same time SATINETTE is preserving your property.

Send a postcard to-day for the beautifully illustrated Brochure that tells you all about SATINETTE. Mention name and address of your usual Decorator when writing.

PINCHIN, JOHNSON & CO., Ltd.

Enamel, Varnish, Paint, & Colour Manufacturers,

General Buildings, Aldwych, LONDON, W.C.2.

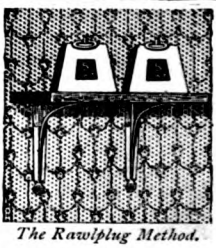
The Old Method.

FIXTURES IN THE HOME AND RAWLPLUGS

A device which enables an ordinary screw to hold in any material.

For fixing and hanging Shelves, Cupboards, Coat Hooks, Pictures, Mirrors, Overmantels, Electric, Gas and Sanitary Fittings, Wires, etc.

For fixing anything by means of a screw to Walls, Ceilings, etc., of Plaster, Brick, Concrete, Marble, Stone, Tiles, etc.



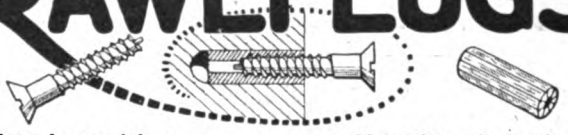
The Rawlplug Method.

One of the most difficult jobs is to put up a picture or shelf where the wall is either too soft for a nail to hold or too hard to get a nail into. An attempt usually results in much damage to the wall, and even if the job is accomplished it is not very satisfactory or lasting.

A Rawlplug is a small cylindrical body of stiffened fibres of roughly the same bore as the screw to be used. To fix, simply make a small hole with the tool supplied, push the Rawlplug into position, and turn home the screw as if in wood—and it is perfectly fast.

The Rawlplug is so made that immediately the screw enters it expands automatically against the sides of the hole; obtaining thereby a firm grip of the surrounding plaster or other materials, and a perfect thread is formed in the fibre.

RAWLPLUGS



Invisible when in position. Will hold half-a-ton in brick.

No skilled handling required. No damage to walls.

HOUSEHOLD OUTFIT.—50 Rawlplugs, 50 Screws, Rawlplug Tool .. Postage 6d. extra. **3/6**

MECHANIC'S OUTFIT.—100 Rawlplugs and supply of Screws, special Rawlplug Tool, 2 Bits Postage 6d. extra. **5/6**

If Rawlplugs do not do all that we claim for them we will refund money in full.

A more complete outfit for Builders and Electricians, with all sizes of plugs and tools, is supplied at £2.

THE RAWLPLUG CO., Ltd., 12-16, Lenthall Place, Gloucester Road, S. Kensington, S.W.7.

DOLLOND

Govt. Opticians. Estabd. Nearly Two Centuries.

EASY MONTHLY PAYMENTS

Watch Pocket Roll Film for Pictures

2¼ by 2¼ inches. Aldis Uno Anastigmat f 7.7 lens; three speed shutter.

15/-

Cash with Order and seven monthly instalments of 9/- each.

LOADED AND DEVELOPED IN DAYLIGHT.

44b, Kirby Street, London, E.C.1

KEEN, HANDY, SAFE.

FINEST SHEFFIELD STEEL

Extract from Testimonial:

"I have tried every description of Razor made and found no satisfaction until I obtained a 'MAB.' The ease with which it daily removes my stubborn beard is a marvel. It is a pleasure to use."—J.S., Woolwich.

Prices:— Dwarf Size—Black, **4/6.** Ivory, **9/6.**
Medium Size—Black, **5/6.** Ivory, **10/6.**
Pairs in Cases (Black), Dwarf, **12/6.** Medium, **14/6.**

Of all Cutlers, Ironmongers and Stores, or direct from

MAB CO., 73a, NEWHALL STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

Booklet on Shaving, post free on request.

FORTNIGHT TAR TREATMENT

(Dr. MAVELLET'S Prescription)

GET TO KNOW IT.

A sure and permanent cure for **FALLING HAIR, DANDRUFF, AND HAIR TURNING GREY.** A home treatment which only takes three minutes a day.

PRICE 19/-, OR POST FREE 21/-

TAR POMADE, for Scurf, Dandruff, Irritation of the Scalp, **5/2.**
TAR SHAMPOO POWDER, hygienic, refreshing, **1/5.**
TAR LOTION, the wonderful Hair Tonic and Beautifier, **7/4, 14/6,** POST FREE.

Tar Treatment can be obtained from Stores and Chemists, or direct from

Consult or write— **JEAN HENRY ET CIE.** *(Laboratory 44)*
14-16, Buckingham Palace Road, LONDON, S.W.1.

In *ancient* days they wore amulets

HEH

to ward off and charm away danger and disease. The amulet illustrated symbolizes an era of superstition, superseded by the era of science.

to-day,

—the safeguard of science

AERTEX cellular

UNDERWEAR FOR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, SHIRTS, SHEETINGS, etc.

Health is now assured by the observance of elementary principles of right-living, selection of diet, choice of clothing, etc. The fuller recognition of air's contribution to vitality has secured for AERTEX Cellular Clothing ever increasing popularity.

The AERTEX Cellular principle of fabric construction allows for the free circulation of even-temperature air next to the skin, stimulating and refreshing the tissues with fresh supplies of health-giving oxygen, preventing chills. AERTEX is the ideal wear for summer days. Prove its value to-day.

¶ **Write for 1921 Catalogue giving full range and prices of garments, etc., together with name of nearest retail depot**

Always look for the AERTEX label on all AERTEX goods

THE CELLULAR CLOTHING CO. LTD. AERTEX LONDON

This Label on all Garments

THE CELLULAR CLOTHING CO., LTD., FORE STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

℗ 5

A selection from List of Depots where AERTEX Cellular Goods may be obtained:

LONDON: Robert Scott, Ltd., 8, Poultry, Cheapside, E.C.2.
Oliver Bros., Ltd., 417, Oxford Street, W.1.
Boltons, Ltd., 177, Piccadilly, W.1.
BELFAST: G. Baird, Mayfair.
BIRMINGHAM: D. McIntosh, City Arcade.
BRADFORD: Brown, Muff & Co., Market Street.
BRIGHTON: J. Smith, Ltd., North Street.
CARLISLE: G. Tweddle, Devonshire Street.
DEAL: C. Russell, Dufferin House.
DUBLIN: R. Geoghegan, Nassau Street.
GLASGOW: Arneil & Yuill, Gordon Street.
GUILDFORD: P. Oldfield, High Street.
LEEDS: Hyam & Co., Briggate.
OSWESTRY: S. Gwilliam, Leg Street.
SIDMOUTH: J. Field & Son, Market Place.

FREE FROM THE FACTORY!

FREE BOOK OF 3,000 BARGAINS & FREE PRIZES

SEND A POSTCARD NOW!

Write now to H. Samuel, 31, Market St., Manchester, for his beautifully illustrated

FREE BOOK OF RARE BARGAINS

It's packed with thousands of offers in Jewellery, Watches, and Plate at Factory Prices, with lists of splendid

FREE PRIZES for all buyers!

WRITE NOW!

GOLD BROOCH, 9/-
Set with Amethyst and Pearls.

DIAMOND & GEM SET ENGAGEMENT RINGS.

Fine lustrous stones in immense variety of new settings. Amazing value. From **45/-**

37/6
ROLLED GOLD WRIST WATCH.
High-grade Jewelled movement. Perfect timekeeper. Moiré silk strap.

OVERSEAS ORDERS *receive the prompt attention of a special manager. Catalogue mailed free.*

GENT.'S SILVER LEVER.
Highly-finished, 15-jewel lever movement, compensation balance, engine turned case.
47/6

A FULL MONTH'S TRIAL ALLOWED

H. SAMUEL

31, MARKET ST., MANCHESTER

Over 85 Branches, including:

WOOLWICH: 40 and 42, Powis Street.
CROYDON: 16, North End.
NEWCASTLE: 2, Grainger Street, W.
PORTSMOUTH: 141, Commercial Road.
GLASGOW: 134-136, Argyle Street.

Full List in the Big Free Book

H. SAMUEL, LTD.

Miss Edna Best

says :—

"I have much pleasure in adding my quota of praise for POND'S VANISHING CREAM—it is unquestionably the best I have yet used. It has a delicate fragrance peculiarly its own, while its beneficial action upon the skin is perceptible almost at once."

The wonderful Vanishing Cream used by so many famous women—Pond's, the ***Original*** Vanishing Cream. The moment you apply Pond's—it vanishes completely—leaving no signs of use save an alluring fragrance of Jacqueminot Roses and a charming delicacy of skin gloriously fair. ***No Summer sun can harm a skin protected by Pond's—no roughness or redness—no sunburn.*** Give your neck, face, and hands a touch of Pond's from the small 9d. tube (handbag size) at every opportunity during the day, and regularly night and morning from the handsome opal jar on your toilet table.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN."

In handsome Opal Jars with Aluminium Screw Lids, 1/3 and 2/6, and Collapsible Tubes, 9d. and 1/3, of all Chemists and Stores. If you cannot obtain the new tube from your Chemist to-day, send us 9d. and we will despatch it per return, post free.

POND'S EXTRACT CO. (Dept. 30), 71, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

Pond's Vanishing Cream

Fairy is a Friend in Need. Dye, Dye, Dye Again.

THE good fairy of all households is Fairy Dye. She makes your clothes look new. She freshens up the drapings and the hangings, the curtains and the coverings. A child can use Fairy Dye, the process is so simple. Fairy is a friend in need when it comes to making things do a little longer—a long time longer. When it comes to a question of buying now or dyeing now, Dye, Dye, Dye again. There is no comparison as regards economy.

Don't take risks with poor quality Dyes. Fairy Dyes are simple, safe, reliable, and give perfect results with Woollens, Cottons, Silks, and mixed fabrics. There is a full range of colours, and by following the instructions on each packet, your Blouse, Frock, Skirt, Jumper, or Table Cover, however old or shabby, can be successfully dyed at home and made to look like new in a shade which is rich, fadeless, and fast.

Ask your chemist, grocer, or drysalter for Fairy Dyes. Should he not stock them, mention his name when sending direct.

Write to-day for Free Booklet on Home Dyeing, and also Household Hints and Shade Card, all Post Free.

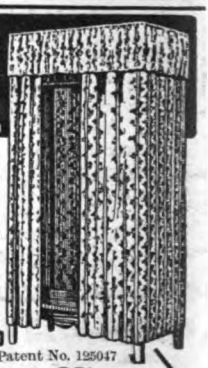
Fairy Dyes

FAIRY DYES, Ltd., 20, Renfrew Street, Glasgow.

Sold by all Drysalters, Hardwaremen, Chemists & Grocers.

The "Stylcraft" WARDROBE

A great boon in Flats and small Houses



The **"Stylcraft"** Wardrobe is a novel and inexpensive substitute for the ordinary high-priced wooden Wardrobe. It gives identically the same service, at a fraction of the cost, and imparts to the Bedroom an air of delightful freshness and charm. Consists of folding wood frame with bottom part, shelf, and row of hooks. Draped in beautiful Cretonne. Easily dismantled. Size 3ft. wide. Price **77/6.** Carriage paid in U.K. Satisfaction guaranteed or money back. *Write for illustrated Pamphlet.*

Patent No. 125047

DOWNINGS (Dept. 33), 61, London Road, London, S.E.1.

MAGRATH'S

The Noted House for

CLARET.

St. Pierre

(A GENUINE BORDEAUX WINE)

36/- per doz. bottles. 42/- per 2 doz. half-bottles. (Sample bottle 4/6 post free).

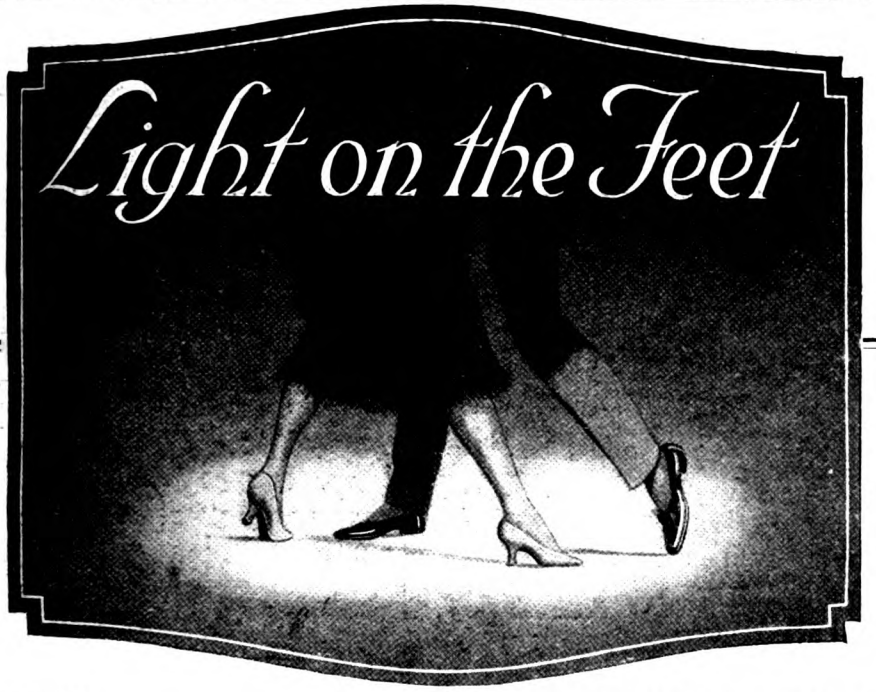
W. R. MAGRATH & CO.,

Wholesale and Export Wine and Spirit Merchants,

LEAMINGTON SPA.

Telegrams: "Perfexo," Leamington. Telephone: 46 Leamington. (Code 5th Edition A.B.C.)

Light on the Feet



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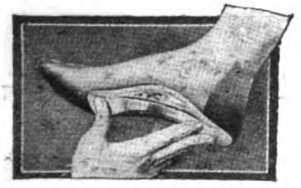

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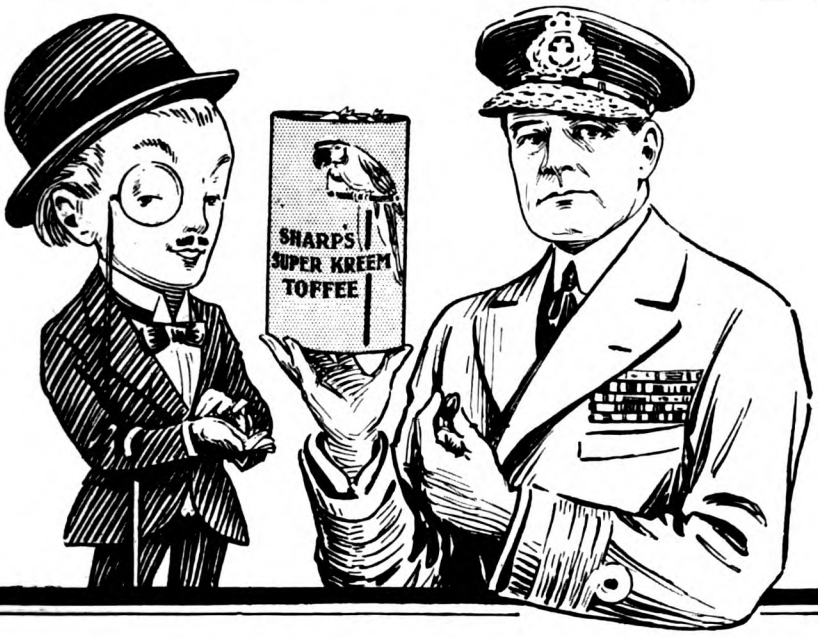

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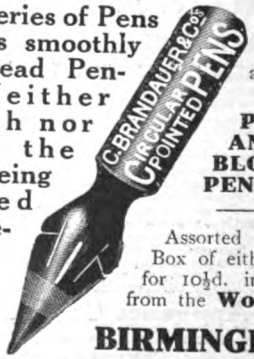

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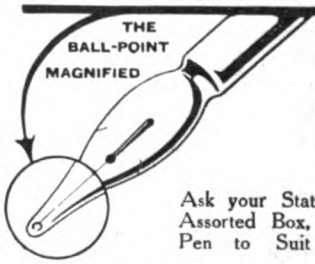

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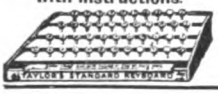

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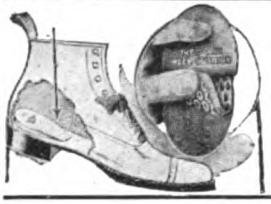

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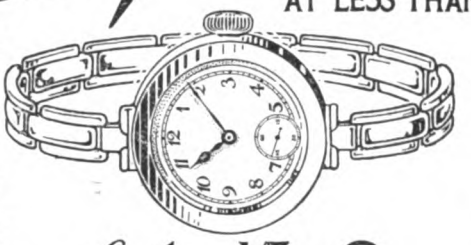

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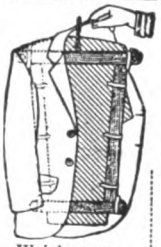

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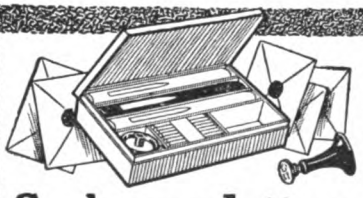

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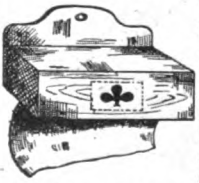

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Well-built, shapely footwear is the essential basis of comfort and good form in dress.

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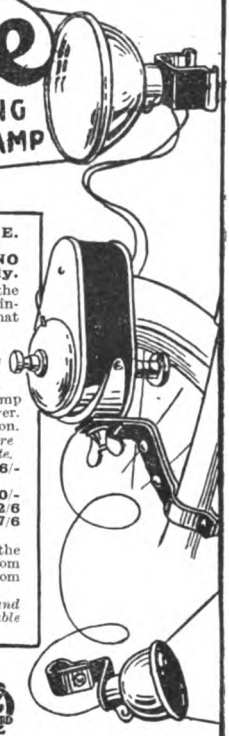

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Refuse substitutes. To ensure satisfaction insist on the Voltalite.

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Stocked by all high-class Cycle and Electrical Stores. If unobtainable write direct.

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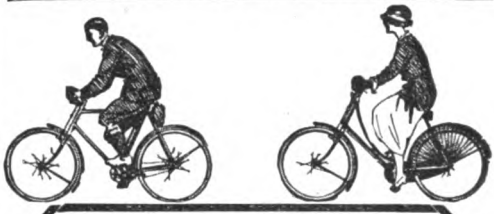

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ARE you as comfortable as you could wish on those holiday and week-end rides? Why not strive for maximum comfort by fitting your machine with a luxurious

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Write now for the new Brooks Book giving notes on the choice of saddles.

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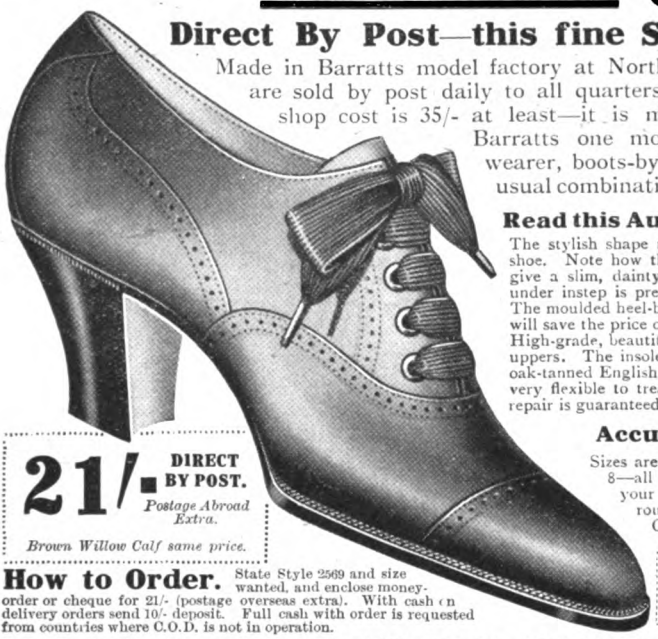
60 Brooks B 85, an extremely easy-riding pattern in ladies' and gent.'s models.

From Barratts to any Part of the World

Direct By Post—this fine Shoe Saves You 14/-

Made in Barratts model factory at Northampton — these beautiful shoes are sold by post daily to all quarters of the globe. In England the shop cost is 35/- at least—it is much more than that overseas. Barratts one modest profit by their factory-to-wearer, boots-by-post sales accounts for the unusual combination of super-quality and low price.



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The stylish shape may be seen from the photo-print of an actual shoe. Note how the graceful curves of the punched ornament give a slim, dainty "set." Sagging at the side or slackness under instep is prevented by the heel-to-front, glove-like fitting. The moulded heel-back gives non-slipping, firm, cosy grip. You will save the price of these shoes in the longer wear of your hose. High-grade, beautifully surfaced, supple Box Calf is used for the uppers. The insoles are leather, and the soles are cut from solid oak-tanned English sole leather, stitched on hand-sewn principle, very flexible to tread. Fair wear or free repair is guaranteed. When ordering state **Style No. 2569.**

21/- DIRECT BY POST.
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Brown Willow Calf same price.

Accurate Fitting Guaranteed.

Sizes are 2, 2½, 3, 3½, 4, 4½, 5, 5½, 6, 6½, 7, 7½, and 8—all in comfortable width. If uncertain about your size send foot shape, got by running pencil round stockinged foot resting lightly on paper. Or send a good-fitting old shoe.

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The Camel, known as the "Ship of the Desert," stores water for many days' travelling. The **"CAMEL"** Fountain Pens store ink for many days' writing.

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Fitted with 14-ct. Gold Nib, with Gold Top-feed,

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Those seeking a genuine and permanent home-cure should write for my free 36-page booklet, "Straight Talk to Stammerers." Method endorsed by Education Authorities, Doctors, Clergy, and others.

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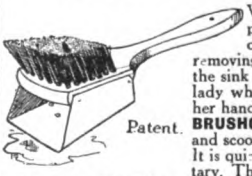

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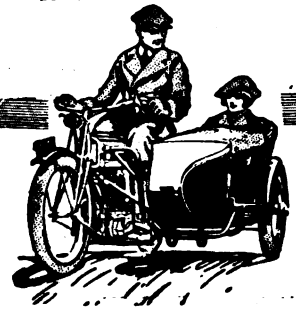

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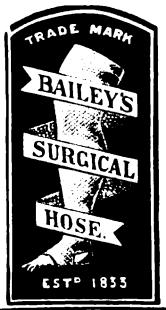

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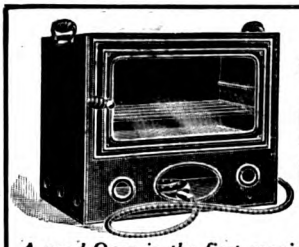

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A good Oven is the first requisite for good results in cooking.

Price 55/- Inside Measurements—18in. by 11½in. by 11in. deep.

Double Cased. Made from Blue Planished Steel and Tin Lined. Complete with Stove, Oven Tin and Grid.

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May be obtained from any Ironmonger, or from Patentee and Sole Maker:

EDWIN CHAMBERS, Ltd., "S" Dept., "Onward" Works, BRADFORD.

Bargains in Real Irish Household Linen

LINEN SHEETS.

Genuine Irish Linen Sheets, fine quality, made of pure Irish linen. Single bed size, 2 by 3 yds., **63/-** per pair; double bed size, 2½ by 3 yds., **78/-** per pair. These sheets will last a lifetime.

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Uncrushable Dress Linen for Seaside and Holiday wear, all pure linen, dyed perfectly fast colours in Sky, Light and Dark Saxe, Navy, Shell Pink, Pink, Strawberry, Helio, Mauve, White, Ivory, Cream, Champagne, Tussore, Tan, Primrose, Myrtle, Sea Green, Slate, Brown, and Black. 36 ins. wide, **4/-** per yard. To-day's value, **6/6** per yard.

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Hemstitched Linen Tea Cloths, snow white Irish Linen, size 20 by 20, **3/6** each; 27 by 27, **5/-** each; 36 by 36, **7/-** each; 40 by 40, **9/-** each.

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Irish Linen Damask Tablecloths, superior quality, size 2 by 2 yds., **21/6** each; 2 by 2½ yds., **26/10** each; 2 by 3 yds., **32/3** each. Irish Linen Dinner Serviettes, **18/6** per dozen; assorted designs. Tossed and soiled serviettes for everyday use, **8/6** per doz.

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Special lot of Hemstitched Irish Linen Tray Cloths, fine quality, size 15 by 22 ins., 4 cloths for **6/6**, postage 6d.; also Hemstitched Irish Linen Tray Cloths, size 15 by 22 ins., beautifully embroidered, 4 cloths for **12/-**, postage 6d.

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Irish Huckaback Towelling for Bedroom Towels, sufficient to make six full-sized towels, **12/6** per bundle, postage 9d.

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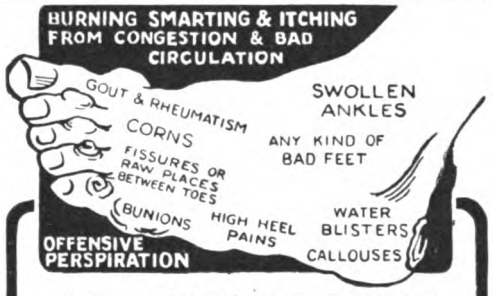

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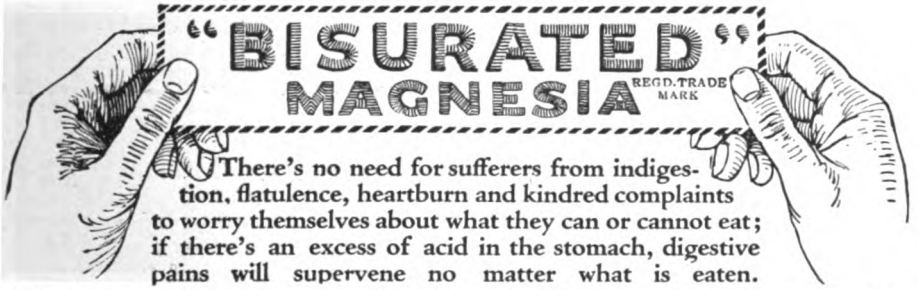

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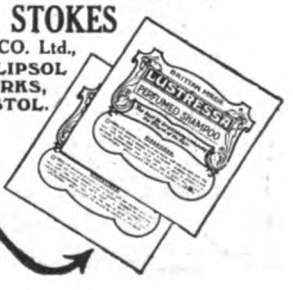

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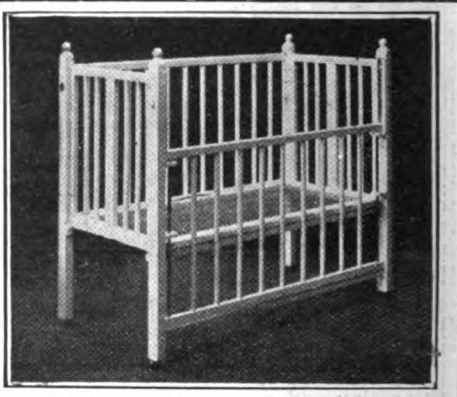

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for August, 1921.

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August, 1921.

"IN HIS LEFT HAND, GRIPPED TIGHT AS A VICE, WAS A SMALL WRIST. HE SWUNG ROUND AND STARED INTO THE TERRIFIED EYES OF A GIRL."

(*See page* 97.)

AN UNCONVENTIONAL INTRODUCTION

by

"SAPPER"

(H·C·McNEILE)

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

I.

BARROW'S, LIMITED, presented the appearance of an exit from a football ground after a Cup-tie. One of their periodical sales was in progress, and frenzied women fought furiously over remnants and other things dear to the feminine soul. In odd corners a few unfortunate men who had been lured in contemplated the scene with terror, while wave after wave of bargain-hunters surged past them with the light of battle in their eyes.

The tobacco department was a backwater—calm and peaceful—and from it Jim Fairfax surveyed the scene with a faint smile. He had bought the tobacco he wanted, and some cigars for his brother-in-law, and was waiting for his parcel to be done up. And though he was supremely unconscious of the fact, at least two of the girls who assisted in that department were as interested in him as he was in the struggle close at hand. Sales they had seen often; men like Jim Fairfax very rarely. Brown and tanned with tropical suns, he had the clear, direct look in his eyes which comes only with an open-air life and big spaces. They were very blue, and he smiled with them in a way that was wholly charming—at least so many women had thought, and even told the owner—though up to date the information had not affected him greatly. Also he was about thirty-three, which is not a bad age for an unattached bachelor with a certain amount of money. Added to which his clothes fitted him, and he was as well groomed as a man has any right to be. Small wonder, then, at the interest of the two assistants.

He turned to the man who gave him his parcel.

"Can one get through?" he hazarded, waving a hand at the mob.

The man grinned. "It has been done, sir. Which department do you want?"

"Jewellery," answered Fairfax.

"Third to the left and straight on, sir."

It took him five minutes to get there, but at last he arrived, gasping. The jewellery department itself was not the scene of much activity, but its position was unfortunate. It lay between the lingerie and the Government linen, and two streams of packed humanity were passing ceaselessly through it. And only the fact that a small present to his sister was as invariable a matter of routine on his periodical returns from Uganda as cigars for her husband made him remain at the counter.

"Rings, sir? Certainly."

The man produced a tray, and Jim Fairfax bent over it. He didn't want anything too expensive, but he was tremendous pals with his sister, and he had only landed that morning after three years in Africa. Something about twenty or thirty pounds, he reflected—and at that moment he very distinctly felt a hand come through between his right elbow and his side. In a flash the lazy, whimsical look in his eyes had vanished, to be replaced by one that was very different. Behind him the crowd was wedged in a complete block; on the other side of the counter the assistant was bending down for another tray. And in his left hand, gripped tight as a vice, was a small wrist.

He swung round and stared over his shoulder—stared into the terrified eyes of a girl. Her face was close to his, and it struck him with a sort of dull amazement that it was one of the loveliest he had ever seen. A thief—a woman shoplifter? Jim Fairfax was no fool to be captivated by a pretty face; in

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the course of his life the hard taskmaster of experience had taught him the folly of judging by appearances. But somehow or other—for the girl to be a thief! He felt as if he had been hit on the jaw.

Her breath was coming in little panting gasps as she struggled for a second or two to free her hand; then, with what was almost a sob, she gave up trying and turned her head away. And Jim Fairfax was reminded of a trapped animal.

On the instant he made up his mind. He might be a fool, and he was certainly wrong, but he felt that he could not give this girl away. And so he turned completely round with his back to the counter and faced her. Then he looked down at her right hand.

"Open it, please," he ordered, quietly.

WITHOUT a word she did so, and he frowned slightly. Lying in the palm was a ring with a big pearl surrounded by a ring of smaller diamonds. He glanced at her face, and it was deathly white; then he looked back again at the ring.

"So that is the one you prefer," he said, deliberately. He drew her forward nearer the counter and spoke to the assistant.

"Don't bother about any more; the lady likes this one." He held it out, and the man took it to examine the price.

And now the girl was staring at him fearfully, as if the thing had got beyond her.

"What are you going to do?" she whispered at length, while the assistant was placing the ring in a box.

"I am going to ask for the pleasure of your company at tea," answered Jim Fairfax, quietly. "They supply it, I believe, upstairs—or they did when I was last in England. And I rather want to talk to you."

"But I don't understand," she stammered, and then fell silent as she watched him pull out his pocket-book and pay fifty pounds across the counter. And she was still staring at him half-dazedly five minutes later as he gave an order to a waitress for tea.

"Well," he said, when they were alone, "would you please explain?"

"I don't know that there is anything to explain," she answered, and her voice was very low. "I tried to steal that ring—and you caught me."

"That," he agreed, gravely, "is fairly obvious. But might I ask why you did it?"

"You wouldn't understand if I told you." She was making a desperate effort to keep her hands from trembling, and suddenly Jim Fairfax smiled. She seemed such a pathetic little criminal.

"I might make an attempt, anyway," he remarked, quietly. "However—leaving that for the moment—might I ask if you do this sort of thing often?"

Her face flamed, and then, as she met his imperturbable look, her eyes slowly filled with tears.

"I suppose you won't believe me," she whispered, "but I've never done such a thing before."

"On the contrary," he answered, "I believe you absolutely. If you will forgive my saying so, you were so incredibly clumsy that it was obvious on the face of it. If you intend to specialize in the line you must get much better at it."

"Don't; for God's sake—don't!" She wrung her hands together and the tears began to well over. "I was mad—utterly mad. I don't know what came over me to do such a thing."

"Pull down your veil over your eyes," he said, gently. "The waitress is advancing on us with buttered toast and things."

He watched her as she poured out the tea, and for a moment the humorous side of the situation struck him. Then, being a man who took stock of such things, he noticed her hands. And her hands were in keeping with the rest of her—perfect.

"Did it strike you," he continued, as he took the cup she handed him, "that if you had got away with the swag, as I believe they call it, you'd have left me in the rather awkward position of apparently having taken the ring myself?"

The girl stared at him speechlessly. "Oh, no—no!" she said, after a little breathless pause. "I didn't think about that; I didn't think about anything, except——"

"Except getting the ring," Jim Fairfax nodded. "I thought that was probably so. And what did you want the ring for? To wear? Your hands are quite sufficiently beautiful without rings, you know."

The girl looked at him quickly, but his tone was quite impersonal.

"I didn't want it to wear; I wanted it to sell."

"To sell!" Jim Fairfax was intent upon his buttered toast. "To steal a ring and sell it implies poverty—great poverty. And, if I may say so, your general appearance hardly gives one the impression of that."

"They've gone without meat at home for the last three months to give me this coat and skirt when I came to London," said the girl, in a voice that shook a little.

"It seems a very nice coat and skirt," he remarked.

"But you can't go to a dance in a coat and skirt, can you?"

"Not unless fashions have changed in the last three years," agreed Fairfax. "So you proposed to buy an evening frock with the proceeds. Is that it?"

" Yes," she whispered, " that's it." And then, with a quiet deliberation that seemed oddly at variance with her previous manner, she put both her elbows on the table and stared at the man opposite. " That's it. And I suppose to a man like you—obviously wealthy—such a thing is incredible. It would have been to me—until a quarter of an hour ago. But before you take whatever steps you are going to take—before you finish this game which I suppose is amusing you—I want to tell you one or two things. They aren't excuses ; they're facts. My father is the proud possessor of three hundred pounds a year. On that my mother and I have to be supported. Some time ago an old school friend of my mother's asked if I might come and stay up with her in London for a few weeks. Quite a normal sort of invitation a man would think—very pleasant. I suppose you've never had to stop at a house where you've been ashamed of the maid seeing your underclothes ? "

Jim Fairfax suppressed a smile. " Go on," he said, quietly.

THE girl bit her lip. " It all sounds so petty—so mean. In my heart I knew what would happen ; so did my mother. But a man's different—and my father couldn't understand my hesitation. I wanted to come, though I knew I'd be miserable if I did. But he—he insisted. He wanted me to meet some men—perhaps get engaged—married. And he couldn't understand that in that set a girl must have lots of clothes if she isn't going to be utterly out of it."

" May I smoke ? " he asked, thoughtfully holding out his cigarette-case to her.

She shook her head. " Not now, thank you. You go on—but I—I want to try and make you understand. I was asked to dances, of course ; I went with my hostess—naturally. And I had two evening frocks—both of them two years old. I wonder if you can realize what that means."

" Much the same," said the man, gravely, " as it means when a man with two hundred a year gets in with a set who all have two thousand. And there is only one way out for him—to break with the set."

She gave a weary little laugh.

" Oh ! I knew it would sound contemptible to you," she cried. " I know there is no excuse. But to-morrow night is the last dance I am going to before I go home. It's not a big one, and all the people I know will be there. I felt I simply couldn't turn up in one of my two old rags, and have all of them pointing and whispering. Of course, they don't really point, and they don't say anything—but I know what they're thinking. Why, even the woman I'm staying with asked me this morning if I hadn't got something else to wear. You see, there's a man going who is—who is rather fond of me, I think, and—and——"

" And you don't think he'll come up to the point of telling you the fact unless you can stagger him with a new frock ! " Jim Fairfax smiled gravely. " A poor specimen if that is the case."

" But, don't you understand, I wanted to look my best," said the girl, desperately. " And it isn't only that—a new frock gives you confidence in yourself—makes you more sure. You feel that other women aren't—aren't—— Oh ! I don't know," she finished wearily. " I can't explain. I've tried to—but a man would never understand."

Jim Fairfax pressed out his cigarette.

" Tell me one thing," he said, gently. " Do you dress for men, or do you dress for women ? "

She looked at him in faint surprise.

" I don't know that I've ever really thought about it," she answered at length. " I think I dress principally for my own pleasure—for the feeling it gives one if one is smart and attractive. A girl wants to be able to stand comparison with other girls."

" Comparison by whom ? Men or women? "

" Both, I suppose," she said, slowly. " And if the men don't notice, the women tell them sharp enough."

" And you think that really affects the men ? " he asked, quietly.

" I don't think—I know it does," she answered. " They may not think it does ; they may be quite sure it doesn't—but it does, all the same. ' Quite pretty, of course ; but what clothes ! My dear man, she's worn that green thing twenty times to my certain knowledge.' Oh ! I can hear them saying it."

" I see," said Fairfax. " Well, we'll let that pass. About this man who is rather fond of you. Do you feel the same for him ? "

" I quite like him," said the girl, slowly.

" ' You quite like him.' Sounds a trifle lukewarm, doesn't it ? Do you want to marry him ? " He was staring at her thoughtfully, and after a moment or two she faced him defiantly.

" I've got to marry him—or somebody else," she said, " for my father's sake. And I like him as well as anybody. You—and people like you—don't know what life is—what the hopeless, unceasing struggle for mere existence means for people like us—since the war. You simply can't understand."

" But there is one thing I can understand—there is one thing I do know," he answered, gravely. " And that is this. No marriage embarked on under those conditions is going to help the situation. It may—superficially—for a time ; but the last state will be worse than the first. Perhaps through long

years in the wilds I see things a little clearer than the dwellers in the cities; but I know that you've got hold of the wrong end of the stick—and it's the rotten, dirty end."

"A thief is pretty rotten," she whispered.

Jim Fairfax laughed. "I wasn't thinking of that little episode at all," he said. "Granted the rest, it isn't very difficult to see why that followed. It's the frame of mind that led up to it that I'm talking about."

"You mean that you can forgive what I did?" And now she was staring at him with a great wonder in her eyes.

"I feel certain that my sister will approve of your choice far more than she would have of mine," he answered, lightly. With a whimsical smile he bent forward, and suddenly the girl looked down on her plate. "Little girl," he said, gravely, "it's not actions that count so much—it's motives. It's the motive that made you do it that I hate. When the right man comes along, he won't care a hang what you're rigged out in—not a hang. Won't you wait for him—however hard, however impossible and hopeless it may seem?"

And then, because he saw her lips were trembling, he turned away and beckoned to the waitress for his bill. It was not until they stepped out of the lift on the ground floor that he spoke again.

"I'm not going to ask you your name—or where you're staying," he said. "But if you would like to meet me again—and I'd awfully like you to like to, Miss Unknown—my name is Fairfax—Jim Fairfax. And the Junior Sports Club will always find me. Good-bye."

Without another word he was gone, and the girl watched his broad figure till it was lost in the crowd. For a while she stood there motionless, and the mob of bargain-hunters jostled ceaselessly past her; then, with a faint smile on her face, she turned back into the lift.

"The writing-room," she said to the attendant, as they shot upwards.

Still with the same faint smile on her lips, she sat down at one of the tables and pulled a piece of paper towards her. For a moment she hesitated; then she wrote:—

"Thank you, Jim Fairfax. A very penitent thief thinks you're rather wonderful. I shall go in one of the rags, and I shall refuse him if he asks me."

Then she sealed it up, addressed it, and slipped it into the box.

II.

THREE days later Jim Fairfax received another letter in the same handwriting. He had spent the intervening time alternately cursing himself for not having found out the girl's name and prosecuting an aimless and utterly futile search for her amongst his

"Tell me, old boy, do you know of any nice

female acquaintances. His sister, marvelling slightly, had told him of two dances to her knowledge that had taken place on the night in question—and had somewhat brutally pointed out that in all probability there had been at least a dozen more of which she knew nothing.

"You can't even tell me what she's like, Jim," she had said, plaintively. "And you won't tell me where you met her—or anything about her—so how on earth you can expect me to help you I don't know; besides, the whole thing is absurd."

"Of course it is, my dear soul," her brother had murmured. "That's why it amuses

me. Oh ! and by the way, here's my arrears of Christmas presents. At first I thought of a ring, and then I thought this might be more useful."

He had listened almost unconsciously to her thanks for the gold vanity-bag, and had departed to buy more tobacco at Barrow's. He already had enough to last him a year, but Barrow's had seemed the only link with the unknown one.

everyone says—am a very stupid little fool. As a matter of fact—am I ? What do you think ? Anyway, it doesn't much matter, does it ? I'm going back to the country to-day. Good-bye, Jim. Thank you a thousand times. I hope your sister (!) liked the ring."

He read it over three times, and then he began to laugh. Finally he stopped laughing and swore softly. After which he

man, with pots of money, who was refused at a dance the night before last ? "

And now he was staring at another letter from her—longing to open it, and yet dreading that it would give him as little information as the first had done. At last he slit open the envelope, after first carefully examining the postmark. Kensington was about as helpful as the dozen dances.

" You will be pleased to hear, Jim Fairfax —at least, I hope you will—that I refused him last night at the dance. As a result of doing so I have got it in the neck from everybody, especially my hostess. He—so everyone says—is very nice. As a matter of fact he is. He—so everyone says—has pots of money. As a matter of fact he has. I—so

finished his breakfast and went round to his sister's house. She was nibbling a piece of toast in bed, and regarded him with disfavour.

" My dear Jim," she remarked, " I'm barely conscious. Not this girl again ? "

" Tell me, Sylvia," he said, eagerly, " about all the men you know who were refused the night before last. At least, all the nice men with lots of money."

She stared at him speechlessly. " You haven't a touch of the sun, have you, or anything ? Nice men with lots of money are not refused—ever."

" A nice man with lots of money was

refused at a dance the other night," affirmed her brother.

"Good heavens! What paper did you see it in?"

"Don't be cynical, Sylvia," said Jim Fairfax, with a grin. "The girl I am looking for refused a charming man with pots of money. I know it. Therefore it merely resolves itself into finding the charming man. You know all the charming men in London—so it's just like shelling peas."

"Jim, I think you'd better go back to Uganda. It's not safe for you to be at large. Give a shout for Bill. He might know."

"I thought I heard a masculine voice," said her husband, appearing at the door. "'Morning, Jim."

"Bill," remarked his wife, calmly, "get a specialist. Jim's gone mad."

"Desist, woman!" laughed her brother. "Tell me, old boy, do you know of any nice man, with pots of money, who was refused at a dance the night before last?"

"Well, that's very funny," said his brother-in-law, coming into the room. "As a matter of fact, I do."

"You do! Why didn't you tell me?" demanded his wife, sitting up in bed.

"Young Peter Cardew," continued Bill, ignoring the interruption, "has been trailing after a girl for weeks. Saw him yesterday in the club gnawing a cutlet. Devilish despondent. Split a bottle with him and all that. Told me that life was finished as far as he was concerned, and that he was going to take to work—or drink. Forget which."

"Did he tell you the name of the girl?" cried Jim, breathlessly.

"No, he didn't say, and I didn't ask him. It's about his twentieth. Why—what's all the excitement?"

"The same as before," said Sylvia, resignedly. "Jim's unknown charmer. I wish you'd both go away: I want to get up."

"Bill, I shall lunch with you to-day." Jim Fairfax hit his brother-in-law heavily in the chest. "You will also ask your friend Peter Cardew, and I shall interrogate him."

"But, confound it, man," said Bill, weakly, "he's a complete stranger to you. You can't ask a man you've never seen about his love affairs. It's positively indecent."

"Then you shall do it for me, old son," cried the other, cheerfully. "And I'll make notes of his answers. One o'clock sharp, at your club."

The door closed behind him, and Bill turned dazedly to his wife.

"My dear," he muttered, "it's preposterous. Peter is really very cut up about it."

"Go carefully at your fences, old boy," she said, soothingly, "and you'll stay the course. But unless something is done soon Jim will be arrested and put into a lunatic asylum, and I shall have a nervous breakdown."

At ten to one Bill made a last despairing effort. The waiter had just brought two cocktails, and with his brother-in-law he was standing in front of the smoking-room fireplace.

"Supposing it's not the same girl, Jim?" he began, nervously. "I mean, Peter's taste is not at all like yours."

"Then you'll have to find somebody else who was refused," said Jim, calmly. "And we'll do it all over again."

"Why the devil you didn't ask the girl at the time beats me," exploded Bill. "In fact, the whole thing is completely beyond me."

"Same here," conceded his brother-in-law. "At the time of our—er—meeting, my mind was occupied with other things. It was only after I'd left her that I began to realize that there never could be another."

"Oh, shut up!" grunted Bill. "Here's Peter Cardew. 'Morning, Peter. My brother-in-law, Fairfax."

Cardew nodded gloomily, and accepted the offer of a cocktail.

"You look pessimistic," began Jim, cheerfully, and the other scowled.

"Peter's taken a toss," Bill plunged heroically. "Haven't you, old man?"

"Absolutely crashed at the last fence," said Cardew, gloomily. "How does one get to Pulborough?"

"Pulborough?" cried Jim, quickly. "By train, I suppose. But why Pulborough?"

"That's where the girl lives," announced Cardew, still more gloomily. "She went there yesterday."

"Charming old place," said Jim. "I know it well. I'll have another cocktail, Bill," he continued, and his host meekly complied.

"Oh! do you?" Cardew regarded him with increased interest. "Know the local gossip?"

"Every word of it," answered Jim, and his brother-in-law swallowed twice.

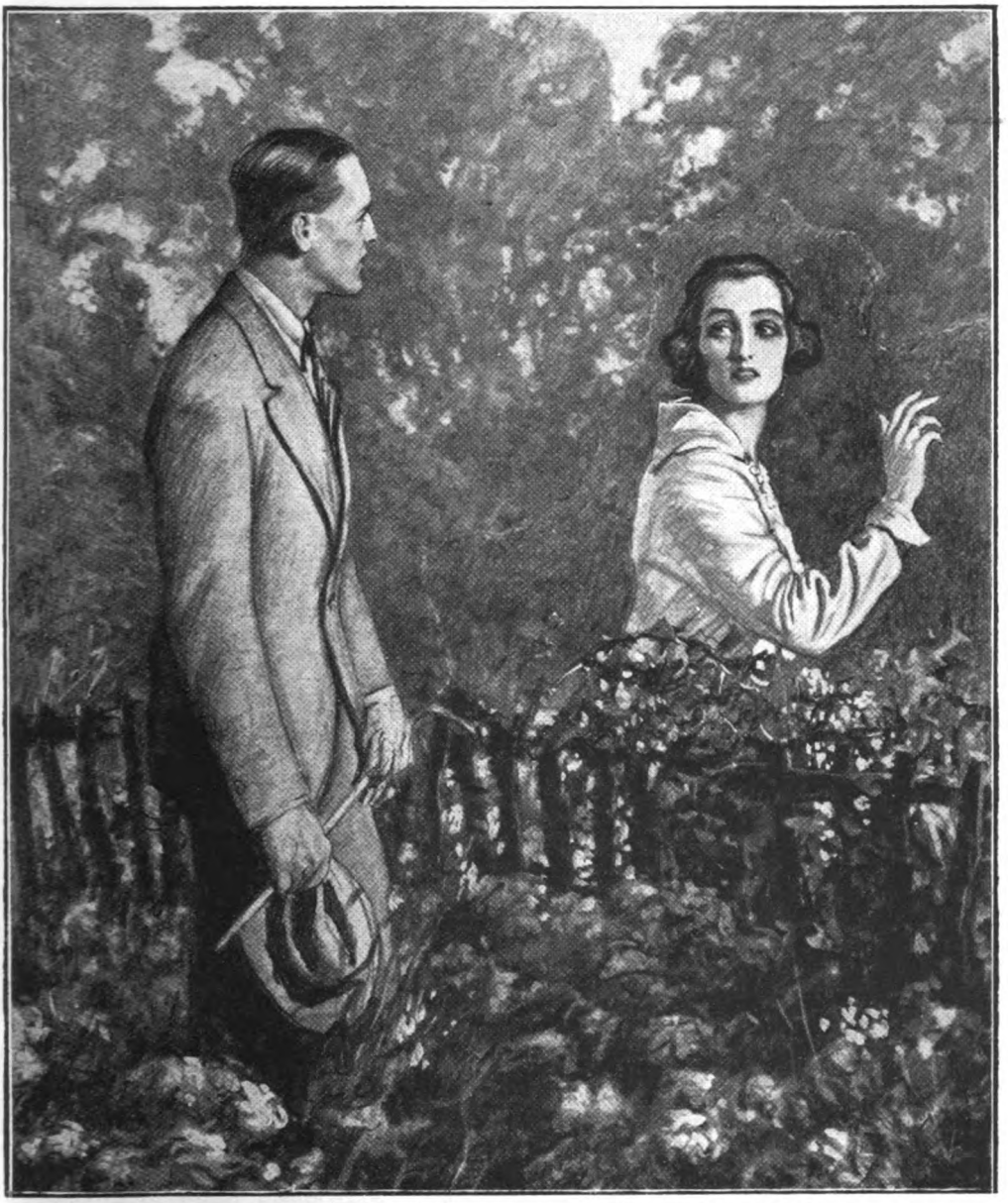
"Well, then," said Cardew, confidentially, "I wonder if you can tell me whether a most charming girl who lives there—a Miss Deering—is engaged, or anything like that. I mean, I know she's not actually engaged—but I wondered if any of the lads were buzzing around."

"There are two families of Deerings," said Jim, thoughtfully.

"Lives at The Gables," continued Cardew. "Sybil is her Christian name."

Jim Fairfax bolted his second cocktail and beamed at Cardew.

"Can't get near her for the crowd, old



"'Good morning, Miss Deering.' With a little cry the girl dropped the watering-can and swung round."

boy," he cried, cheerfully. "Absolutely like bees round the honey-pot. You haven't an earthly." He smote the outraged suitor heavily on the back and turned to his brother-in-law. "Completely forgotten till this moment, Bill, that I sha'n't be able to lunch after all. Got to see a man on business."

"About a dog, I suppose," said Bill, ponderously. "I'll bet you it proves a dud."

"Take you on—even fiver," said Jim from the door.

"Done!" answered Bill, as the other disappeared. "Let's go and have some lunch, Peter."

"I say, is that bird quite right in his head?" demanded Cardew, still staring at the door. "What's he go and rush off like that for? I wanted to ask him a lot more questions about Sybil Deering."

"I wouldn't bother, old man," said Bill, diplomatically steering him towards the dining-room. "I don't expect his answers would have been very illuminating."

III.

"GOOD morning, Miss Deering." With a little cry the girl dropped the watering-can and swung round. Then, as she saw who it was who had spoken, every vestige of colour ebbed from her face, leaving it deathly white.

"How did you find me?" she stammered at length.

'With a great amount of trouble, and an even greater amount of luck," said Jim Fairfax, with a faint smile. "Why did you run away like that without telling me who you were?" He was staring at her gravely as he spoke, and after a while the colour began to come back to her cheeks, though her lips were still trembling.

"Because I was so ashamed," she faltered at length. "I never wanted you to know who I was."

"I don't think that was very kind," he remarked. "Besides, you never thanked me for your tea. Incidentally, I rode off a young gentleman of the name of Peter Cardew yesterday. He was on the point of starting for Pulborough to see you."

"It was through him, was it? I didn't know you knew him."

"I didn't until yesterday at lunch," said Jim. 'I left him with the impression that any attempt to see you here was doomed to failure."

"What on earth do you mean?" said the girl, with a puzzled frown.

'I was afraid he might get here first, you see—and that you might change your mind and accept him. And if he had I should have lost a fiver."

"I don't believe you know what you're talking about," cried the girl. "Will you please explain?"

"No—I never explain. Horrible things—explanations. They make things so ordinary. Now, if we don't bother about what's gone before, the present situation has great possibilities."

"But we *must* bother about what's gone before," she answered, and her voice was very low.

"I disagree entirely," said Jim, quietly. "In me you behold a stranger, standing on the wrong side of a hedge. Ordinary hospitality insists that you should at once invite me to change from that side to the other."

For a moment she hesitated; then, with her head thrown back a little, she picked her way over the intervening flower-bed and faced him steadily.

"Mr. Fairfax," she began, and her eyes met his bravely, "I'm in your power. If you had wished to, you could have given me in charge the other day, and disgraced—all of us here, as well as me. You didn't: you were very big. I suppose you could still do so if you wanted to. But from the way you talked to me that afternoon I'd formed a picture of you—which was rather a wonderful picture. When you went away and left me—and didn't ask my name or anything—I was just longing to tell you. But I couldn't speak; there was such—such a lump in my throat. Don't spoil it all now, Jim Fairfax—please."

"Spoil it!" stammered the man. "What are you talking about, little girl?"

"You've found me—I don't quite know how," she went on, not noticing in her absorption the look of blank amazement that had spread over his face. "I suppose Peter Cardew talked, and you put two and two together. But please don't spoil it now—please, please don't."

'You want me to go away?" said Jim Fairfax, slowly. "You don't want to see me? I understand. I was a bit of a fool to think you would."

"Oh! it's not that," cried the girl. "But after what happened——"

"Which I have completely forgotten," interrupted Jim.

"You can't forget," she answered, bitterly. "I can't forget—ever. So won't you leave things as they are, leave me with that remembrance of you at—at Barrow's—upstairs?"

Jim Fairfax drew a deep breath; at last he was beginning to understand.

"The ring," he announced, gravely, "*was* intended for my sister."

"I don't see what that's got to do with it," she answered, flushing a little.

"I think it's got everything to do with it," he remarked. "The point is, can I make you agree with me? My dear," he went on, and his voice was very tender, "did you really think that I was such an unutterable blighter as to seek you out in order to hold that mistake of yours over your head?" She was silent, and after a moment or two he insisted, gently: "You didn't think that, did you—Sybil?"

"I don't quite know what I thought," she whispered.

"I've got that ring in my pocket," he said, taking one of her hands in his. "And we are in a supremely ridiculous position here. What about that little summer-house affair over there?"

"You're mad, Jim Fairfax," she said, staring at him with wonder in her eyes.

"Absolutely," he agreed, calmly. "So let's go over to it and sit down on the side remote from the house—and see if the bally thing fits."

SUMMER TIME

by

ROLAND PERTWEE

ILLUSTRATED BY NORAH SCHLEGEL

HUSBANDS as a class are tedious, foolish, and short-sighted. Their tediousness exasperates, their folly infuriates, their short-sightedness begets despair. The virtues acquired in the days of courtship they discard along with other bachelor attributes less admirable but equally attractive. They forget the existence of florists—make a fetish of sobriety and import dull details of business or career into their domestic lives. They settle down visibly—and settle up reluctantly—they lose the knack of saying pleasant things and acquire the habit of framing grave observations. In short, they blunt the essential points of married life and whet the unessential.

Wives are greatly to be pitied.

Woman, being by necessity the practical sex, naturally turns for her delight to all that is abstract in life. That is her reason for marrying, for a lover is always abstract until he becomes a husband. Fortunately for the race she is not aware of this consequence until it is too late. She does not know that marriage will act upon the average lover as water acts on Portland cement, and will bind him into a kind of concrete—an immovable mass of solid virtues.

Wherefore woman is to be pitied.

Of lovers little need be said. They are neither to be pitied, admired, nor greatly reprehended. Such exquisite torture is theirs that we should do ill to add to it.

From all of which preamble the reader may well suppose he is to be introduced to a domestic triangle. He is right, but let him have no fear. It is a triangle with rounded corners—almost a circle, and not a vicious circle at that. And now, without a friend in the world, we will embark upon the history of Violet and Ben Dalrymple and of their mutual acquaintance, Donald John Esmond, who was a very pleasant young fellow indeed.

Benjamin Dalrymple was a barrister-at-law and a busy man. He was tremendously earnest about his job, and successful, too. He used to study his briefs in bed at night—which is not a very companionable proceeding.

When Violet spoke to him he usually said "Wha-at!" as though his mind had to be brought from some considerable distance before being in position to reply.

And sometimes he would tell her the circumstances and how he proposed to deal with them. Which was very kind and thoughtful of him, though not always a source of delight to Violet.

It would be grossly unjust to suggest that Violet was not interested in his professional avocation. She was intensely interested—she liked to hear about it, but not unnaturally she liked to hear about other things as well. Her tastes were conservative, and it is even possible she might have enjoyed an occasional talk about herself. It is an exercise which has been found agreeable to many. In a word, she yearned for something charming and—so far as her husband was concerned—she yearned in vain. And so, of course, she was depressed.

And that was where the trouble came in.

It is a very tragic circumstance to have an appreciation for charm and to be given no charm to appreciate. Dear old Ben was an excellent fellow and a kind husband, but domestically he was stupid. What little charm he once possessed had long ago dissipated, to be replaced by reasonableness—a shade of petulance—an inclination toward self-absorption—a disinclination to take any trouble—and, although he never expressed it, a very strong distaste for anyone save himself sharing his wife's society or rendering her service. It is to his discredit, perhaps, but lots of men are like that; otherwise the story of the dog in the manger would lose its point.

And that was where Donald John Esmond came in.

To Donald nothing was too much trouble and no service too small to neglect. It was a source of real delight to him to get a taxi in the rain. He would travel for miles by rail and on foot to secure for Violet the first

bunch of early primroses. At his disposal were a thousand ingenious devices for inconveniencing himself to add to her well-being. His self-abnegation was beyond belief—his intuition faultless—his sympathy unbounded. And he was always sincere. There is no doubt about that. He delighted in delighting. He neither asked for nor expected a reward.

ON an evening in mid-September Violet was standing by the open drawing-room window watching the yellowy pink twilight change the familiar scene into the likeness of a Japanese print.

"Do come and look," she said.

Benjamin was seated in a deep armchair, some papers on his lap, his eyes fixed on the picture rail, his lips moving, his brows contracted.

"Wha-at!" he replied.

"It's such a wonderful evening."

He turned his head and looked at her. Almost with surprise he realized how pretty she looked—her profile was softened by half light, and shadowy against the opal sky.

"Is it?" he said, and crossed to her side.

For a while they stood looking out in silence.

"H'm! Quite beautiful—quite."

It was unusual for him to be as sentimental as that. Violet slipped an arm through his.

"It's almost the last of the long evenings," she said. "Ten days more of Summer Time, that's all."

"Eh? Oh, Willett! Yes, the Daylight Saving Bill, you mean?"

She nodded.

"I think it's awfully sad putting the clock back—adding another hour to darkness. I hate the day one has to do that. Always makes me feel creepy and old."

"Old? What nonsense."

"But it does. Like letting in the winter, it is." She shivered. "Ben, when one puts the clock back, what becomes of that hour?"

"Nothing, of course."

"It must go somewhere, because we've had it and then we pretend we haven't and prove we haven't."

He smiled.

"A little elementary arithmetic for you," he said.

"No, I think it's horrid to steal an hour from the day," she went on. "It's the most miserable evening in all the year."

And quite unexpectedly Ben produced an idea.

"Then we must do something to cheer you up."

"Do what?"

"A little dinner—a theatre—whatever you like."

She looked at him in genuine wonder.

"It's ages since you suggested taking me anywhere."

"Been so busy lately. 'Sides," he frowned a little, "you've been going out a lot. Where'd you like to go?"

"Us together?"

"'Course."

She puckered her forehead, and then a light of sudden excitement danced in her eyes.

"I know. 'Pagliacci.' It's the only night they're doing it this season. I'd most awfully enjoy to go there. Caruso is singing. I think I'd almost forget about the clocks being put back if I went to 'Pagliacci.' We'll have a special dinner here first."

"Monday week, isn't it?"

"Um!"

"I'll get the tickets next time I'm up."

"That'll be lovely." A pause. "Ben!"

"Yes."

"Why are you so nice to-day?"

"Wha-at!" He had drifted back to his chair and picked up the papers.

"I wish you'd often—— It's so seldom——"

"Must get on with this," he interrupted. "It's rather important. Sorry, but—er—ye-es—ye-es."

And Violet knew well enough that those twin "yeses" meant the iron curtain of professional affairs had been lowered between them. But since, for a little while, they had talked together as they might have talked in the brave old days she bore no resentment. Indeed, it was a very contented Violet that slipped quietly from the room to answer a telephone bell ringing in a distant part of the house.

Donald John was at the other end of the wire.

"You sound in ripping good spirits," he said.

"I am," she replied.

"Splendid," said Donald John. "I say, you remember those little honey cakes they gave us at the Berkeley? The ones you liked."

"Um!"

"I persuaded the chef to give me the recipe. I've posted it on to you."

"You actually tackled the chef?"

"Well, of course."

"I really think you're the bravest person that ever lived."

"Oh, rot," said Donald. "But I didn't ring up on that account."

"Well?"

"Wanted to know if you'd care to do anything on Monday week. Last day of Summer Time, you know. I seem to remember you were a bit down last year."

"He turned his head and looked at her. Almost with surprise he realized how pretty she looked."

"I was, but how did you remember?"

"I don't know. Thought if you'd care to—to——"

"It's awfully sweet of you, but Ben has promised to take me to 'Pagliacci.'"

"Has he? Oh, good, I'm glad. I was going to suggest our going there, if you'd fixed nothing."

"Yes, he just asked me. Thanks so much for thinking of it."

"Not a bit. Riding in the Row tomorrow?"

"Expect so."

"May see you there. Good-bye."

"G'bye."

Violet turned away from the 'phone with a little smile of pleasure. It really had been rather nice telling Donald about Ben's invitation.

"Good old Ben," said Donald to himself, as he hung up the receiver. "That's fine!" He lit a cigarette, dropped in an armchair,

and spread out his legs, the pattern of contentment. A moment later a flicker of doubt shaded his expression.

"Lord! I hope he doesn't forget."

This was an unsettling thought.

"Better be on the safe side."

He stretched out a hand for the telephone and gave a number.

"That Covent Garden? Any stalls for 'Pagliacci' on Monday week? Or a box? Yes, thanks very much—that'll do nicely. I'll send my cheque."

There was nothing surprising in the fact that Ben made no further reference to the proposed visit to the opera. Violet did not expect him to do so. He disliked repetitions and could not endure making plans. Besides, during the days that followed, he was exceptionally busy and not very communicative. Violet herself never broached the subject, being far too pleased he had suggested it to irritate him with discussion.

"NEVER seen you look so fit and jolly," said Donald, after a half-mile canter in the Park on the morning of the appointed day.

"I feel both," she laughed, and added, "There is an advantage in getting a little older—one has the most delicious thrills of youthfulness. When one is actually a girl one has no feeling one way or the other."

"Why do you talk about getting older?"

"I'm thirty-three."

"Well, hang it, I'm thirty-five."

"Then you ought to have married ages ago."

He shook his head.

"Forgive me if I disagree on that point."

She laughed.

"You'd make a ripping husband."

"Thank you." There was a touch of seriousness in his voice.

"Is it late?" Violet asked, "because I have an appointment at twelve with Lucile about my frock I'm going to wear."

"New frock?"

"Um! It's nice." She described it—he understood women's clothes. Most essentially masculine men do.

"I don't know why, but I'm making a real occasion of to-night."

"Splendid. Where are you going to dine?"

"At home. The opera starts so early and I hate an empty restaurant. I've ordered a special menu."

"It's nearly twelve now," said Donald. "If you like to dismount here and hop into a taxi I'll lead your gee back to the stable."

"It wouldn't be a nuisance?"

"Heavens, no."

"Kind cavalier," she said.

They parted a minute or two later.

"Au revoir."

"Pleasant time," said he.

Violet spent a long time dressing that evening, and the result rewarded the labour.

Dinner had been ordered for seven-fifteen, but at five minutes past Ben had not returned.

"I hope he won't be late," said Violet to herself.

Almost as she spoke she heard his latch-key in the door, and she went out to the landing to meet him. He was ascending the stairs slowly, and his expression was distant.

"Well, dear," he remarked. It was his usual greeting.

"You'll have to hurry," said Violet. "Dinner will be up in ten minutes."

"Why? Is it earlier to-night?"

"Yes, quarter past. I told you."

He took out his watch and examined it.

"Oh, yes, yes. I remember. So you did. H'm! Well, I won't bother to change, then."

"Ben!"

"I'm a bit tired—full day."

Violet poured him out a small whisky-and-soda, his invariable tonic on arriving home. It gave her an opportunity to hide her expression. Surely, surely he hadn't forgotten! Of course not—he would have dinner and dress quickly afterwards. He absorbed his drink in yawning silence.

"That Selincourt case I told you about."

"Oh, yes, I know." Then, as though it were a sudden inspiration: "Do you like my new frock?"

He was about to reply when dinner was announced—on which account his views were lost to the world.

Certainly he talked at dinner—talked quite a lot—but never once did he mention the opera.

"Very wonderful dishes to-night," he said.

Violet nodded. She was not taking a very active part in the conversation. Rather turbulent simmerings of resentment kept speech behind closed lips. Ben scarcely noted her silence—the champagne had loosened his tongue and he was chatting away quite gaily on professional matters. An anecdote about a witness and rather a sharp exchange he had had with the judge. They were quite good stories.

Toward the end of the latter Violet interrupted.

"Hadn't you better dress now?" she said.

He wrinkled his forehead.

"What on earth for? I sha'n't change to-night. Matter of fact, I've some work that'll keep me busy for an hour or so."

Violet rose to her feet, biting her lip.

"Might tell them to serve coffee in the study."

Women are beautifully trained.

"Very well," she replied, and turned away. As she laid her hand on the door handle the telephone bell sounded. She crossed the hall, entered her own little room and picked up the receiver. Tears were not very distant.

"Yes," she said, in rather a mechanical voice.

"Is that you, Violet?"

"Donald?"

"Yes. Just rang up to say I shall be at the opera, too, to-night. Perhaps I shall see you there."

"No—you won't. I'm not going after all."

"Not going?"

"Ben's too busy."

"I say, that's bad luck. Look here, it's awful cheek, but wouldn't you come to my box. I'll collect you in the car."

"Thanks, Donald, but I don't think I should like to meet a lot of people to-night."

"There won't be any people—I've asked no one. Do come, I say. Last day of Summer Time, and all that."

It was quite a short silence that followed—a very minor hesitation, then :—

"Very well, I'll come. It's sweet of you, Donald."

"I'm jolly lucky not to have to sit it out alone," he replied. "I'll be along inside twenty minutes." And after he had replaced the receiver : "I thought so. What a rotter the fellow is."

AS she mounted the stairs Violet said to herself :—

"I'm glad there's one person in the world who doesn't forget."

She put on her cloak and descended to the hall. Outside the study door she paused for a moment before entering.

Ben was sitting at his table, writing.

"Good-night," said she.

"Wha-at?" He raised his eyes and looked at her. "You're going out? I didn't know."

"Didn't you?"

"Where are you going?"

"The opera. It's 'Pagliacci.'"

"Is it?" His brows came down a trifle. "Yes, I remember, you asked me to take you."

"I thought you asked me."

"Yes, I did. I——"

"Are the tickets in your pocket?"

"No."

"You forgot."

"I've been so busy. You should have reminded me."

She gave no answer to that.

"I *have* been busy."

"One can be busy and still remember a promise."

He pushed back his papers, and stood.

"Who are you going with?"

"Oh, someone who happened to know you'd invited me and who seemed to guess you wouldn't remember."

(Which, of course, was perfectly true, if not a very kind thing to have said.)

A frown settled between Ben's eyes and his mouth hardened.

"That young cub, Esmond, I suppose."

She became instantly defensive.

"You can hardly call him a cub for remembering the things you forget."

"It isn't his job to remember them."

"Oh, dear!"

"I object to your going to the opera with that boy."

(It is characteristic of husbands that they choose the wrong moment to take the high hand.)

Violet laughed.

"How very silly."

"You go about together too much."

"Not at all. He doesn't bore me."

(It is characteristic of wives that they never allow husbands to score a point.)

Ben adopted a new line of attack.

"Is there anything so very enlivening in his society that is lacking in mine?"

"I should be sorry to miss the Prologue," said Violet.

"Because if that's the case I should be glad to know."

Violet looked at him squarely.

"There's a difference—yes."

"Well, go on."

"There's a difference in charm."

"Charm?"

"Yes. He never forgets—he remembers—and more than that, he invents. He invents all those friendly little things that marriage finds no time for."

"I don't follow what you mean."

"It shouldn't be difficult. I suppose marriage is only what we make it—but it's very level, Ben. All along there." She drew a straight line with her forefinger. "No mountains—no blue hills—nothing but plains—flat grey plains."

"I am sorry you find it so."

It was such a disappointing answer that her reply flared angrily.

"And so am I. There's a devil in human nature that has to be satisfied."

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing alarming. It isn't a bad devil—rather a childlike one, perhaps, that makes you leave the dusty road sometimes to stop and pick a flower or two by the way."

"Need one go to the opera with a man who isn't one's husband in order to pick flowers by the way?"

"If one's own garden is empty," she retorted.

He walked across to the fireplace and started to fill a pipe.

"Look here, Violet, it's absurd to have a row about this—but—but it won't do. I can't have you taking risks." He caught the challenge in her eyes at the word "risks." "I'm not going to allow you to accept from another man what you imagine I ought to give you."

"I don't *imagine* you ought to give me anything."

"But it's evident you do."

"No. The reverse. I want you to give me what I've never asked for—never expected."

"You can't accuse me of treating you unfairly."

"I don't. Much too fairly. I have my allowance—my meals—I'm privileged to sit at your table, govern your servants, entertain your guests—and I have *carte blanche* to run your house. I have all that—I admit it willingly, and I haven't a ha'p'orth of gratitude for the lot. But if you were to come back from the Courts one day with a bag of sweets and say, 'Here, I bought you these!' or bring me a bunch of early primroses in the spring—or remember some of the silly little things you used to say to me when we were engaged——"

"Well?"

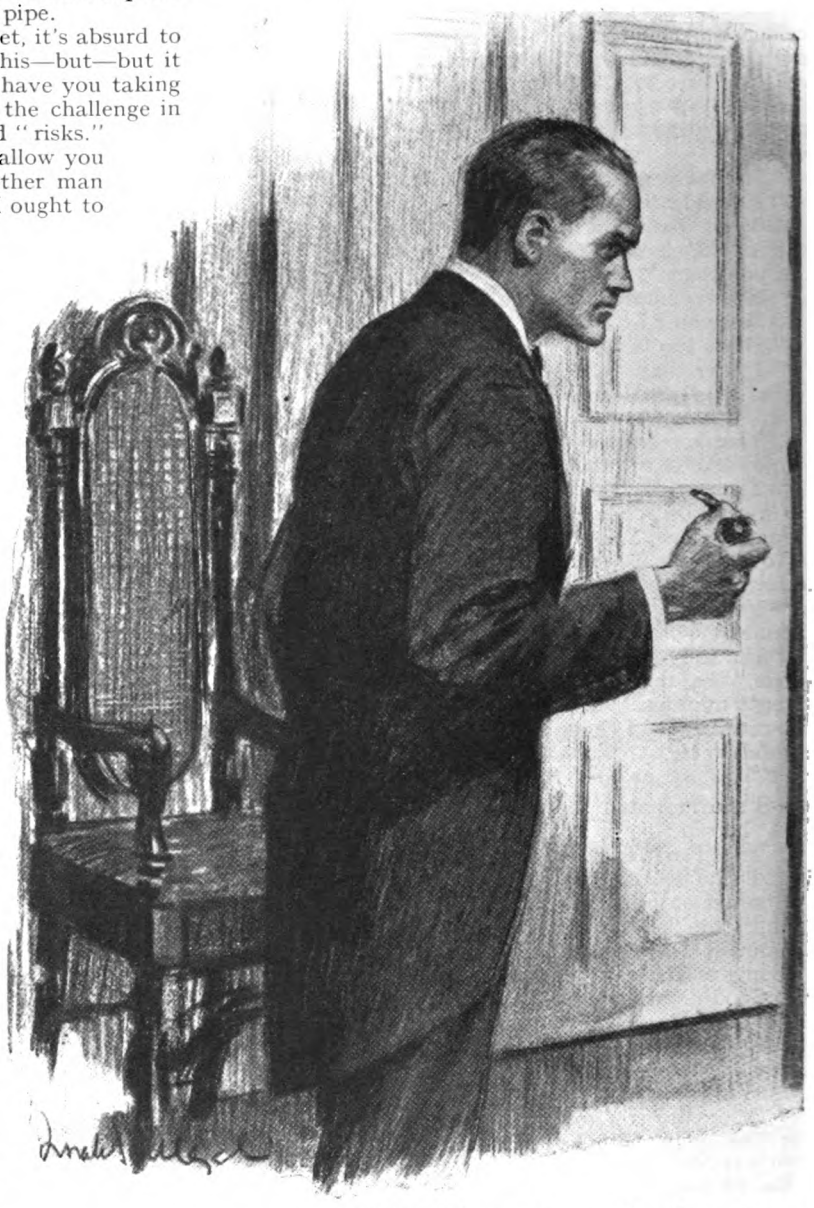
"But you don't—it's a nuisance, I suppose. Too trivial. Why, even a week-old promise is too far away to remember."

"Not at all. I suggested we should go somewhere together."

"And that's as far as we'll get. And that's why I'm going out with Donald. It isn't a nuisance to him—it's a pleasure. He likes to perform those sweet, agreeable, chivalrous little acts which mean quite a lot to a woman."

"But we're not children any longer."

"No. It seems rather a good reason to me for keeping a little bit of nursery in one's heart. You won't understand that, Ben—



"'I forbid you to go. I'm beginning to
'You wouldn't wish me to be here

lose my temper, Violet.'
while you did that?'"

understand how old a woman feels who isn't allowed to keep that bit of nursery."

He lit his pipe deliberately—the argument was passing out of his depth, yet, somehow, he felt a shrewd impression he could swim in that water—if he dared. That was the trouble—he didn't dare. Orderly going had been his so long it was impossible to admit the growth of wings. A policeman might as well declare himself a fairy. Ben Dalrymple stuck to his guns and fired a round of pure convention.

"If you imagine I am going to stand by while you complain of my neglect to another man——"

"It will be soon enough to reproach me when I do so," she returned. "Good night."

"Stop!"

"Please."

"I forbid you to go."

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind opening the door for me."

"Violet!" There was a dangerous light in his eyes.

"Don't let's be foolish about this," she said.

From the street below came the musical note of the Gabrielle horn on Donald's car. It was the signal of his arrival.

"I forbid you to go. I'm beginning to lose my temper, Violet."

"You wouldn't wish me to be here while you did that?"

"Good God," he cried, "you are deliberately trying to annoy me — to run counter to my wishes. I'm hanged if I'll allow you to go about with another man. It's gone too far as it is and it's got to stop."

"How dare you?"

"You imagine I have no affection for you — well, you're wrong. I—I love you—tremendously — you're my wife and—oh, one gets into grooves, I know. I'd like to be everything you want me to be. I'll do my best—but I'm hanged if I'll be complaisant. Either this fellow is sent to the right-about or——"

"Or what?"

"Or you return to an empty house."

He certainly looked very sincere as he issued this ukase.

"Really!" said Violet.

"I mean it."

"Oh, very well," she replied, a bright pink spot burning on either cheek, "if you consider my going to the opera with a friend is sufficient reason for deserting me, I have no argument against it. Good night."

"Violet!"

The room door snapped crisply behind her. A moment later he heard her voice in the street below apologizing for being so late,

and Donald's cheerful assurance that there was " bags of time." Then the sound of the car moving away.

Benjamin sat down lumpily at the writing-table—his eyes staring, his hands thrust out before him. He stayed so for a minute without movement, then with an outward sweep of the arms he sent books, papers, ash-trays, all the litter a man surrounds himself with, fluttering and crashing to the floor.

The door opened and Roberts, the man-servant, came in with coffee.

" Take it away," said Ben. ' Don't want any."

" Very good, sir."

Roberts put the tray down and stooped to collect the fallen papers.

" Let 'em be—let 'em be, man. I'd tell you if I wanted——"

He sprang to his feet and passed hurriedly out of the room.

The drawing-room door was open and he entered without turning on the lights. Through the window-glass he had a glimpse of the new moon, serene above the tree-tops. Like many other practical men he was superstitious over trifles. The sight salted his indignation with alarm. He threw himself down on the sofa with clenched hands, and lay there for nearly an hour while, within him, anger and remorse played a fine duet.

PRESENTLY Roberts came in and switched on the lights.

" Yes, what is it ? "

" Beg pardon, I didn't see you, sir."

" What do you want ? "

" I was going to draw the curtains."

" All right—all right."

The heavy silk curtains slid over the window recess and blotted out the night. Having accomplished this to his satisfaction, Roberts crossed to the mantelpiece and opened the face of the clock.

" What are you up to now ? "

" I was going to put the clock back an hour, sir. It's the last day of Summer Time."

" Is it ? Well, never mind, I'll look after that."

" Very good, sir. Anything you wanted, sir ? "

" No—yes. Pack me a bag. I sha'n't be sleeping at home to-night."

" What clothes——"

" Oh, anything—anything. Let me know when you've done."

Roberts went out.

There was a portrait of Violet hanging above the piano, and Ben's eyes travelled frowningly toward it. So pretty she looked, and youthful, with just a shade of sadness at the corners of a mouth made for laughter. He hadn't noticed that expression before. Lots of things he hadn't noticed really. He turned away and covered his eyes with a wandering hand. Why was that shade of sadness there ? Was it disappointment ? What had caused it ? Lack of sunshine, perhaps—sunshine he might have provided. Yet by the common standard of mankind he was a good husband. This charm that she yearned for—what manner of thing was that ? Where was its place in everyday existence ? With startling suddenness he saw that in the realities of married life the will and power to charm is sacrificed to idleness. He could remember now the prickings of a thousand impulses to please her or delight, impulses sterilized by laziness and yawned out of fruition.

" By God," he exclaimed, " she's right ! I've cheated her all along the line."

Naturally enough she turned to another man for these cherished gifts of thoughtfulness and consideration that he, in his comfortable blindness, had denied her. It came to him vividly how much he had denied himself in checking the mood to please. The warmth of her smile, the exquisite flash of gratitude in her eyes, the impulsive pressure of her hand, the hundred and one indescribably subtle expressions of intimacy, each in itself a pearl beyond price in the necklace of days and years—gone, all of them—dusty from disuse—mildewed and faded from neglect.

Charm and the will to please are potential factors in the make-up of happiness.

There is a stubborn belief in the minds of most men that nothing is lost irredeemably. The best is often forgotten or mislaid, but with a little trouble it can be recovered. Then and there Benjamin Dalrymple registered a tremendous vow that he would endeavour to win his way back to his wife's esteem. He knew enough of life to realize that the task would be none too easy—that success would not depend upon following in detail the charges she had brought against him and dealing with them antithetically. Her smile would not be his at the price of following instructions, but at the inspiration of new ideas—unexpected tenderness. He did not believe she had more than a liking for this fellow Esmond (damn him !). Perhaps when she saw the effort he, Ben, was making to requite his neglect, she would tell the confounded fellow to clear off. (From which thought, and its accompanying malediction, it will be seen that Benjamin Dalrymple was entirely human. Jealousy is a very live force and does not go out of business at a moment's notice.)

He would like to have known what was passing through Violet's mind as she sat at the opera. Not for an instant did he

imagine she would doubt the sincerity of his threat to leave. It was a cruel thing to have said—a hurtful thing. Poor girl! The thought of the empty house would be preying upon her. He hated himself for having threatened it. And yet—when she returned perhaps and found he was still there——

It would be difficult to define at what point in his reflection Ben abandoned the project of leaving home. The reversal of his plans was automatic. When Roberts came in to ask if he wanted a taxi the answer was :—

"I don't. You can unpack that bag and go to bed."

After that he sat for nearly two hours maturing plans for the future and listening for the sound of Violet's arrival.

It was nearly twelve when he heard a car stop before the house and Violet's voice saying "Good night."

"I'll see you safely inside," said Donald.

The click and turn of the key.

"Good night."

"Good night." A pause, then : "Donald, don't run away directly—come in for a minute or so, will you?"

"You're not tired?"

"No, I want you to come in, please."

The front door closed quietly.

Ben put a fidgeting hand over his mouth. There had been something queer in her voice that frightened him. She had thought he would not be there, and yet had asked this fellow to come in. The drawing-room door was half open and he heard their voices again in the hall.

"Just wait here a minute, please. I want to make sure of something."

Then he heard her light step ascending the stairs.

"God," exclaimed Ben—a rush of blood set his face burning. Without an instant's thought he switched off the light and retreated into the curtained window recess.

Violet glanced into the room, opened an adjoining door, closed it again and mounted to the bedroom floor. A moment passed and she returned slowly to the landing, and, leaning over the well of the staircase, called Donald to come up. Then she entered the drawing-room, switched on the light and passed over to the mantelpiece.

DONALD came in.

"I say!" he exclaimed, "is anything the matter? You look awfully queer."

"No, it's all right," she answered, faintly.

There was a silver tray of drinks standing on a little table. Donald mixed a brandy-and-soda and put it in her hand.

"No, really——" she began.

"I should. The air was a bit heavy at the opera to-night."

She took a sip from the glass and put it aside.

"Thank you—thanks."

"Do sit down, I'm sure you're not well."

She obeyed, and he put a cushion at the back of her head.

"Is there anything I can do? A doctor or——"

"No, nothing. Just stay a bit—that's all."

She closed her eyes. He drew up a chair and sat looking at her anxiously.

"You're awfully kind, aren't you—a dear person—don't know what I should do without you—now."

"What is it?" he asked.

"Ben," she replied. "He's gone."

"Gone!"

"Yes, he left me to-night."

"Oh, my dear girl!" he exclaimed, where another man would have said "The blackguard!"

"It's my fault, I suppose—partly."

"I won't accept that."

"Yes. He warned me—threatened to go if——"

"Well?"

"Oh, it's so foolish?"

He hesitated, then—

"Was it anything to do with you coming to the opera with me?"

"In a way."

"But he couldn't take you. He wouldn't be so selfish as to—no, I oughtn't to have said that."

"Yes, he was. Oh, I don't know. I wonder if I was wrong. I—I didn't believe him—I thought——"

"But, good God, he must know that I wouldn't harm a hair of your head—that my greatest wish in the world is to—to serve you—help you in every possible way."

"I know, my dear, I know. You've been splendid and sweet to me. But men don't understand that—they think—oh! And now he's gone—gone——!"

"Take some more of that brandy."

"It's all right. A shock, that's all—so—so unbelieving. Be a help, Don, I feel rather lost."

"Tell me everything that happened," he asked.

And, haltingly at first, she told him.

"It was beastly of me to talk like that, but I felt so cheated." There was a catch in her voice. "It isn't that I wasn't fond of him, but—oh, I don't know. You spoiled me, perhaps."

"What have I to do with it?"

"Made me rebel against the routine—the cold facts. All the little thoughtful attentions—your disinterestedness—so kind—and

understanding—it was so different—so charming. You never once thought about yourself."

"I can't see how a decent man could think of himself when you were near."

"Once he used to talk to me like that—ages ago."

"He didn't appreciate you, Violet."

"I don't know," she said again.

Donald John Esmond rose to his feet with clenched hands.

"Lord!" he exploded. "I think I could kill the man who made you unhappy."

"Please don't talk that way."

"But to put himself first," he cried.

"Perhaps that's what I've done."

"You've the right—you're a woman."

"No, I wanted too much—gave too little. Now I suppose I shall have to pay."

"Not if I can prevent it." He sat by her side. "Look here, Violet. Let me carry the load—I'm a man, it's my job. Why should you blame yourself? You have no fault. He didn't love you—couldn't have loved you—never understood what love means. He was all for himself and never a thought for you."

"Oh, Donald, you haven't understood life—you're all ideals."

"I thank God for it! I tell you the man is set and settled. He couldn't do a decent thing, hasn't a charming thought. It's 'I' with him all the time, 'I.' If he'd been worth worrying over would he have left you to-night—without provocation—on a rotten, baseless suspicion? He was glad to go, I expect—wanted an opportunity, and took the first."

"I oughtn't to let you go on."

"You're too kind, Violet—too sweet. It's you who don't understand life—angels can't. They are facts I'm telling you. The only love worth having is selfless love—that's the only love worth mourning for. The love that asks nothing in return."

"Don't say any more," she pleaded. "I felt so wretched—so lonely—so old. It's dear of you to try and make me happy, but——"

"I'll succeed," he gasped, and his arms went round her. For a frightened instant her face looked into his. He dropped his head and kissed her, kissed her, kissed her. And between the kisses he poured forth a stream of protestation. "I want you—I'm burning for you—I want you more than anything in the world."

(All of which points the moral that a selfless love is apt to borrow largely from the ordinary variety, although its advertising campaign differs in essential features.)

It was useless to resist the first torrent of his emotion, but when his voice died away, for her answer she stretched out both hands and thrust him away from her as something detestable. Then she rose and walked to the hearth, smearing her fingers across her lips from side to side. What passed within her she could find no words to express, but her eyes were eloquent enough, and they did not hold the look that a Prince Charming may yearn to see.

A kiss may achieve marvels, but equally it may destroy marvels, and he is a wise man who shall predict which way the dice will turn. In that predatory affront—that instant of primal acquisitiveness—the steady light of Donald John Esmond's selfless love went rocketing skyward in a tongue of greedy and destructive flame.

After that the darkness was very intense.

"That you should think I meant that," she said. "That because he distrusted me I should give him cause."

He, too, had risen, and was standing before her with his chin down. A very fallen idol with feet of common clay.

"My dear——," he stammered.

"Please."

He gave a little gesture and turned toward the door.

"I'm sorry. Good night."

There was something tremendously pathetic in his retreating back. It stirred an instant pity in her.

"Donald—Donald!" she said.

He turned.

"Yes?"

"It—was it my fault—did I let you believe?"

"No," he answered. "I tried to take, that's all. I'm a cad. Please don't bother with me."

"Oh, Donald, I wish it hadn't happened. Such a good friend you've been, and I wanted a friend so—so dreadfully."

"Don't bother with me," he said again. "You're not likely to forget it in a hurry or trust me again. I'd have you believe, though, that there isn't anything in the world I wouldn't do to wipe it out."

"Yes," she answered, "it's a pity. I suppose one would always remember."

They were silent, and the clock on the mantelpiece took up the tale and chimed the quarter after twelve. Violet's eyes travelled slowly toward it and an idea came into her face.

"Donald. It's the night when the clocks are put back. Let's put back the clock and forget that this hour ever existed. It wouldn't have existed if we did that."

"What's the use?" he said.

"It's so dreadful to lose good things—to have them spoilt. I know—at least perhaps I know. Shall we?"

"You would forget then?"

"The hour hasn't existed. You never came in to-night. You left me at the

door. I never told you my trouble — I never let you think—oh, it seems so good to me."

"You are a wonder," he said, as he watched her finger reverse the clock hand by a full compass.

"Good night, Donald."

"Good night."

"Between the kisses he poured forth a stream of protestation. 'I want you—I want you more than anything in the world.'"

BEN DALRYMPLE waited till he heard the car moving away from the door before he stepped from behind the curtain. Violet was leaning against the mantelpiece, one hand pressed to her heart, and she was very white. She gave a half-checked cry as she saw him. Then her muscles tightened and her eyes narrowed coldly.

"So you were listening?" she said, and nodded.

He made no answer.

"I hope you are pleased with what you heard."

"I heard nothing," he replied, very quietly.

She stared at him perplexed, as from his waistcoat he drew a biscuit-thin gold watch and, with a glance at the clock, deliberately twisted the hands back an hour.

"No, I heard nothing," he repeated. "There was nothing to hear." Then he raised his eyes and looked at her pleadingly, a hand half extended. "But I can't believe that Summer Time is over," he said.

There are oases in every desert. If it were not so there would be no such thing as a happy ending.

A RECORD-BREAKER'S MEMORIES

by

ALFRED SHRUBB

The World-Famous Runner

MANY of the discoveries in the world of science, art, and even sport are the result of accidents. A burning straw-rick was responsible for starting me on my running career and firing me with enthusiasm for long-distance racing. In the pretty Sussex village of Horsham there were few excitements, and when one night the fire-bell clanged out its ominous warning the thrill of adventure appealed to my boyish nature. One accident led to another. In my curiosity to find out where the fire was I met F. J. Spencer, a member of the Horsham Blue Star Harriers. He and I were unknown to each other but we struck up an acquaintanceship which ripened into one of the closest friendships of my life. As we stood waiting for the engines, Spencer suggested that we should run to the fire, which was three miles away, at a small place called Southwater. This seemed rather a tall order to me. All day I had been carrying bricks up a thirty-rung ladder and felt stiff and sore. But on Spencer promising not to run too fast I agreed to accompany him. I found my heavy boots and working clothes a big handicap, but Spencer encouraged me as we trotted along in the darkness, slowing down a little when I appeared to be tiring, then increasing the pace when I got my wind. I had expected to see something good in the way of conflagrations, and keen was my disappointment when we arrived to find only a mass of smouldering straw.

On getting back home at one o'clock in the morning Spencer expressed himself gratified that I should have stayed the distance so well.

"Alf," he said, "I feel sure that you have the makings of a runner in you. Why not join the Blue Star Harriers?"

Youngster-like, I felt flattered, accepted the invitation, and ran with him regularly two nights a week. Spencer was my guide, counsellor, and friend in my salad days, and to his kindly advice and help I owe much of my success on the running track.

Being now over forty years of age, I am out of the running, so far as actual competition goes. Still, it is better to be a "has-been" than a "never-was," and I intend to devote my time, energy, and experience to training and coaching the young idea, so that they may uphold the fair name of Britain—the greatest sporting nation in the world—and develop their bodies, as well as their brains, along healthy and profitable lines.

Twenty years on the running track have stored up a wealth of interesting memories, and I should like to recall some of the incidents that stand out in bold relief in my mental vision as I write.

I START RECORD-BREAKING.

SCOTLAND gave me a wonderful reception when at Glasgow, on November 5th, 1904, I set out to lower the ten miles record. A large blackboard had been erected in the centre of the ground, with a man on either side of it to write the time for every mile as I passed around the track. This was a splendid idea. On a quarter-mile track there are two long straights, and by the blackboard method one can see at a glance what time he is doing as he passes up one side and down the other. It worries a runner who is out to break records to hear a raucous-voiced individual shouting the various times.

I had read of doughty deeds done by valiant Scots inspired by the music of the bagpipes, and before I started I asked my friend Brown to get a piper to play at intervals. The effect upon me was magical.

As I walked from my dressing-room the cheers of the crowd were deafening. To me it seemed as if all Scotland had suddenly emptied itself into that wonderful arena. Standing on the scratch line I had to wait as patiently as possible until all the other runners had got off their marks, according to their time starts, which ranged from one to nine minutes. A great shout went up as I set out on my task. Running to my schedule, I reeled off mile after mile, each one being punctuated by roars of approbation from the crowd. At the seventh mile, however,

I had fallen behind schedule to the extent of about fifteen seconds. In answer to frantic appeals I pulled myself together and rushed away for a quarter of a mile, when I was about twenty seconds to the good. Thus I passed the critical stage of the race. From then onwards I felt that, barring unforeseen accidents, success was assured. My limbs were moving strongly and freely and my wind was sound as a bell. Gradually the other runners were being pulled in and passed, and as I entered upon the last mile, well ahead of my schedule, I had almost caught up the limit man.

A TEN-MILE RECORD.

A QUARTER of a mile from home the bell rang, and to the accompaniment of tumultuous and continuous cheers I sprinted round the last lap, beating all the handicapped men and breasting the tape in the record time of 50min. 40⅘sec.

"Now go for the hour record, Shrubb! The chance of a lifetime!" shouted the officials and spectators. And although I was suffering from reaction caused by that final sprint, like Alexander of old I was out for fresh worlds to conquer. I "strengthened my sinews and summoned up the blood." The pipes skirled and spurred me on to my final and greater effort, and I shall never forget the closing scenes as I laid low the world's amateur record for the hour, completing 11 miles 1,137 yards. They carried me to the pavilion shoulder high, sang "Will ye no' come back again?" and cheered until they were hoarse.

MARATHON RACES.

I DO not believe in Marathon races. There is a limit to human endurance, and man was never made to run 26 miles 385 yards. The Marathon beat me and I am not sorry. It was outside my distance. Still, although I never fancied my chances, I had one thrilling experience when I ran Tom Longboat, the Indian, at Madison Square Garden, New York. This is "some" building, accommodating from twenty-five to thirty thousand spectators.

I made the pace straight away and was soon a lap in front of Longboat, who kept plodding along steadily. I increased my lead until at the end of twenty miles I was nine laps ahead. Longboat, I may say, was the most imperturbable runner I have ever met. If I had been twice the number of laps in front of him it would not have made any difference to the Indian. He knew what he could do, and although he was always rather uncommunicative, he told me after the race that he was certain I could not last it out.

After leading by a mile right through to the twenty-third mile I became sick and collapsed. Longboat finished the distance and won. To this day people ask me why, when I had such a commanding lead, I became *hors de combat*. I can partially explain this by saying that the building was full of the smoke from a thousand cigars. Longboat said this did not affect him—in fact, he rather liked it—but I had never been accustomed to it.

Alfred Shrubb, after winning the Ten Miles Cross-country Championship at Manchester, 1902.

Tom, however, ran a wonderful race and deserved to win. He was running at his distance; I was not. In subsequent contests I competed against all the big Marathon men in America and Canada, including ten, twelve, and fifteen miles with Longboat; fifteen miles with Dorando, the Italian; twelve, fifteen, and twenty miles with St. Yves, the Frenchman; and twelve and fifteen miles with Johnny Hayes, the American Olympic winner in 1908, and won all of these races.

In spite of my aversion for Marathons, I have the greatest admiration for these big-hearted athletes who are out to do what has never been done before. Everyone remembers the Big Four in these races. They stand pre-eminent in running history. Longboat the

reticent, almost taciturn—a wonderful athlete; St. Yves, slightly bandy-legged, short and thick-set, a lion-hearted little man, who was said to train on light French wines; Dorando, the lovable Italian, who crowned his long-distance achievements by staggering to the tape in the memorable Olympic Games in 1908; and Billy Sherring, who won the Greek Marathon at Athens in 1906.

My recollection of Billy is crowded almost into one race. This took place at the Baseball Grounds, Buffalo, the distance being fifteen miles. I burst the tape six laps ahead of him, ran to my dressing-room, picked up my camera, and strolled back to the winning-post in time to take a snapshot of Billy finishing. Sherring, one of the best sportsmen that ever lived, thoroughly enjoyed the situation, and the newspapers made much good fun out of the incident.

Of indoor tracks we know nothing in this country, but they are quite plentiful in America. The majority are made of boards, and range from eight to twelve laps to the mile. The runners have special shoes made for the purpose.

After I had beaten many of America's best professionals on level terms it was suggested that I should "try my strength" in relay races, running two, three, and five men at different distances. This led up to one incident which is perhaps worth putting on record.

At Boston I accepted a challenge to run five men for ten miles, each of my competitors to run two of the ten miles. The outside public, when they learned the names of the selected ones, were convinced in their own minds that this time I had bitten off more than I could chew. The five men were: Frank Kanaly, the American five-mile champion; Tom Williams and Sam Myers, of Boston; and Tall Feather and Red Hawk, two Indians from the reserve.

In this race my only stipulation was that I should be allowed to say which man should be chosen to start the race. After some demur this was agreed to. We played, or rather ran, before a packed "house" that night. Everyone was intrigued with the novel idea, and wondered which man I should select to start off with. To me the proper course seemed obvious—to select the slowest man so that I might force a big lead on him over the first two miles. This, of course, meant that the second man had to run "all out" to gain the lead back again.

It was all a matter of strategy. I allowed the second man to run himself out the first mile, taking it easy while he was pumping his heart out, as it were. Then I dashed ahead for the next mile and regained my former lead. Adopting the same tactics with the third, fourth, and fifth men, I finished an easy winner.

In the same building, on another occasion, I ran three men for six miles, each of my opponents doing two miles, and gave them the privilege of placing them in any order they liked. This race I also won.

Breaking the two miles amateur record at Kennington Oval.

RACING AGAINST HORSES.

SOMETIMES during my Canadian tour I found it hard to get competitors, and this led to another unique experience. A friend and I were talking over matters one day when he said, "If you can't find a man to compete with, why not run against a horse?" The idea tickled me immensely, and echo answered, "Why not?"

After leaving Winnipeg I went to Portage la Prairie, a little town fifty-two miles west, and at once proceeded to the nearest livery stables.

"Do you mind if I have a look at your horses?" I asked the proprietor. He had no objection. I examined them and found one which I thought ought to be able to go ten miles at a good pace.

"Now then," I said, "I want to make a contract with you. I am out here on a running tour and want to fix up some big matches. It would be a novel sight for the local residents to witness a real contest between a

man and a horse. Have you an animal good enough to stay the distance of ten miles ? "

His reply was in the form of another question : " What will you pay me ? "

" I'll give you twenty-five dollars, and you will receive the money before you go off the mark."

The bargain was clinched, and the proprietor immediately started training one of his best animals on the road. After six days' preparation I again asked him if he thought the horse could do it.

He seemed rather dubious about it, so I put forward another suggestion, which was that he should bring another horse to the ground, and if at the end of five miles he found that the first horse was unlikely to finish he could start the second one from the half-way distance.

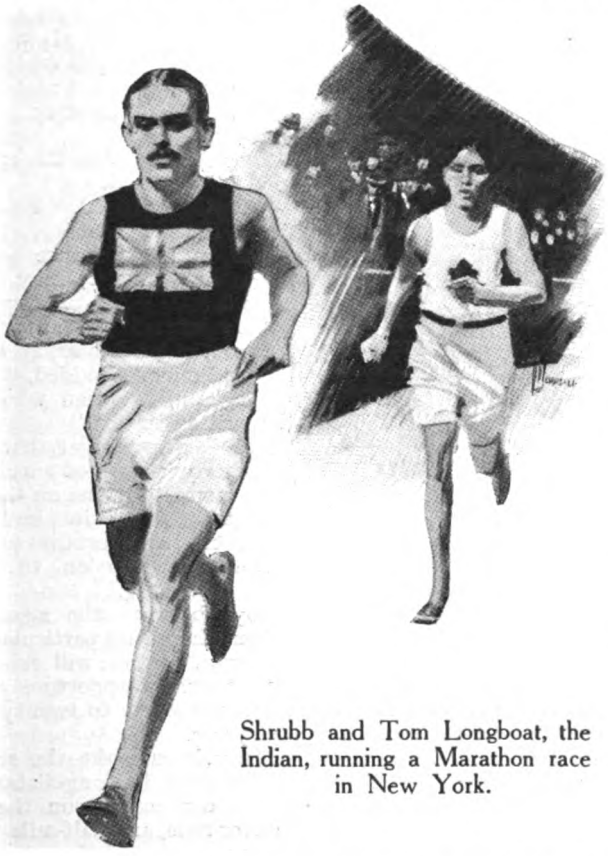
The people turned out *en masse*, and some big bets were made on the result.

According to agreement, the horse was driven in a buggy, the occupants weighing about one hundred and eighty pounds.

Crack went the pistol and off we went on our long journey. The horse took the lead by about sixty yards in the first mile and a half, but by the time we had doubled that distance I had caught up my four-legged opponent, who appeared to be going rather groggy. When five miles had been covered it was obvious that he could not stay the full course, and horse No. 2 then took up the running.

I had set myself to do the race in 52min. 30sec. if possible.

The fresh horse started off in great style and soon got back the ground lost by his stable companion. I was feeling in good fettle, however. Up to the last one hundred and twenty yards we ran neck-and-neck, and the excitement became intense. At this stage there appeared to me only one chance to win. Remembering that a horse will not willingly run over a man, I jumped in front of his head, and in this way kept my lead, swerving first to one side of the track, then to the other, and just winning on the post. My time for this race was 52min. 40$\frac{3}{5}$sec.



Shrubb and Tom Longboat, the Indian, running a Marathon race in New York.

I have appeared on many queer tracks in my time, but the most extraordinary of all was when at St. Lawrence, Mass., I ran a five-mile race against Sam Myers, of Boston, U.S.A., in what was known as the Lawrence Armories.

The track itself, fourteen laps to the mile, was boarded, and around this chairs were placed with the backs to the runners. The audience sat looking over the backs of the chairs. It was at once evident that we were up against difficulties. Running at top speed it appeared impossible to get round the corners without doing some damage to ourselves or others, or both.

Realizing that I was " up against " an opponent who could show a clean pair of heels, I shot in front at the sound of the pistol to secure the inside position. I kept my lead for a mile and a quarter ; then, feeling that I should increase it, I decided to do so whilst going up one of the straights.

But the inevitable happened. I flew towards one of the corners, caught hold of a chair to save myself, and fell heavily. My opponent played leapfrog over the chair and fell on top of me. We both scrambled to our feet, bruised and shaken, and I managed to win by a very small margin.

LOSING A SUIT-CASE.

AN unrehearsed incident happened to me when I visited Boston. I had just arrived from New York City, and had bought a brand new suit-case. This I took with me to Park Square Coliseum, where I was running.

After the race an Englishman from Manchester—so he said—came to my dressing-room and introduced himself. He had seen me run many times in Cottonopolis, and his admiration for me was unbounded. Would I dine with him in the evening ?

I accepted his kind invitation, and he took my suit-case while I went to the manager's office to settle up my affairs. Fifteen minutes later, when I came to look for my newly-found " friend," he had disappeared, along with the suit-case.

Several of the spectators who were standing outside the dressing-room informed me that they had seen the gentleman I was looking for making his way to the subway trains.

Immediately I set out to establish another world's record, but my discomfiture and disgust may well be imagined when I discovered that I had been beaten on the post. The train was gliding out for Sullivan Square and the gates were banged in my face. Officials telephoned to the next station, but Boston being a city of one million souls, it was like hunting for the proverbial needle in a haystack or looking for your long-lost brother at an English Cup final.

If only he had left my running-shoes I should not have grieved about my loss, but they had won me many a big race, and I found it hard to get their equal. As the alleged Mancunian stood about six feet I am afraid the running outfit would not be of much personal use to him. I have an idea, however, that it was my money he wanted. If so he would find the suit-case a mare's nest rather than a Tom Tiddler's ground, as I always took care to leave my cash in the safe keeping of one of the sports officials.

ADVICE TO YOUNG RUNNERS.

IN the course of my career I have trained many athletes by mail. Every week I reply to hundreds of letters from youths who want to study my methods. While running at my best in England in 1902–3–4, I received a communication from a Mr. J. W. Johnson, a young American student, asking for my advice, as he was trying to make the one and two miles. I gave it willingly.

Later, when I went to Boston in 1907, an invitation came for me to visit the Harvard University track. This, by the way, is one of the finest stadiums I have ever seen. Horseshoe in shape, it is built of cement, and is capable of holding about eighty thousand people.

Looking round the place I saw a runner putting up what I considered rather a good show. As he had no pace-maker I volunteered to assist him. It did not take me many minutes to change, and soon we were scampering round the track together. At intervals I gave him a few words of kindly-meant advice.

He smiled rather sardonically, I thought, and said : " You seem to know something about the game. Have you ever taken lessons from Shrubb of England ? I have, and he has improved me wonderfully."

I laughed outright and he was obviously annoyed.

" Don't you think this man Shrubb is any good ? " he asked.

" Well," I replied, " I don't exactly think that. I have heard a good deal of him myself in long-distance work. But before we go any further, may I ask what your name is ? "

" My name," he answered, " is J. W. Johnson, of Rochester, New York."

" And mine," I added, " is Alfred Shrubb, of England, the man who has been giving you written tuition."

I shall never forget that American's face. As a study in amazed surprise it would have made a small fortune on the kinema.

All training requires individual treatment, but there are certain rules that have a universal application to youths who are keen on running.

Boys between the ages of thirteen and sixteen should be particularly careful not to overtrain, as this will ruin their chances of success when opportunity knocks at the door at nineteen to twenty-five, an athlete's best years.

Many boys make the serious mistake of taking part in long-distance races. They should concentrate on the hundred yards, quarter-mile, and half-mile until they are old enough to go in for more sustained and vigorous training. Even the shorter distances ought not to be run too often, but merely in order to keep them in condition.

To the athletes who are capable of taking part in real competitions I would advise easy preliminary work in whatever distances they are running.

For instance, any runner can manage the hundred yards and quarter-mile comfortably, but he must specialize in these and leave other lengths alone if he is determined to achieve success.

The half-mile and mile are two other events that always work together. Again, longer distances of from two to five miles will carry the average runner through a ten-mile race. Occasionally, of course, he

will have to run the full distance, with other work at four miles fast, then six and eight miles, until the necessary stamina is secured.

Man *v.* Horse—Shrubb just winning on the post.

When taking part in races the competitor should always arrive at his destination from three to four hours before the start, or, if possible, the night before. He should keep away from excitement of all kinds and take as much rest as possible.

Just before actually setting out for the race a light rub-down should be indulged in, and the competitor should not arrive on the mark until the race is almost due.

When it is finished he should proceed straight to the dressing-room, take a lukewarm bath, and change into his other clothes quickly. This will keep the cold from the muscles and sinews, the cause of many a breakdown to good athletes.

While in training he should go to bed early, not later than ten o'clock, rise in the morning at seven, and take a brisk walk for a mile before breakfast. The fresh morning air is pure and invigorating, and as sound lungs are the first essential, this is highly important.

He must also be careful to diet himself properly. Plenty of good plain food, such as toast, boiled eggs, grilled steaks or roast beef (well done), with green vegetables and not too many potatoes, rice, tapioca, and sago puddings and custards, with preserved pears, pineapples, or peaches. If he rings the changes on this routine, and is moderate in all things, he will climb well up the ladder of Success.

The LONG HOLE

BY

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

THE young man, as he sat filling his pipe in the club-house smoking-room, was inclined to be bitter.

"If there's one thing that gives me a pain squarely in the centre of the gizzard," he burst out, breaking a silence that had lasted for some minutes, "it's a golf-lawyer. They oughtn't to be allowed on the links."

The Oldest Member, who had been meditatively putting himself outside a cup of tea and a slice of seed-cake, raised his white eyebrows.

"The Law," he said, "is an honourable profession. Why should its practitioners be restrained from indulgence in the game of games?"

"I don't mean actual lawyers," said the young man, his acerbity mellowing a trifle under the influence of tobacco. "I mean the blighters whose best club is the book of rules. You know the sort of excrescences. Every time you think you've won a hole, they dig out Rule eight hundred and fifty-three, section two, sub-section four, to prove that you've disqualified yourself by having an ingrowing toe-nail. Well, take my case." The young man's voice was high and plaintive. "I go out with that man Hemmingway to play an ordinary friendly round—nothing depending on it except a measly ball—and on the seventh he pulls me up and claims the hole simply because I happened to drop my niblick in the bunker. Oh, well, a tick's a tick, and there's nothing more to say, I suppose."

The Sage shook his head.

"Rules are rules, my boy, and must be kept. It is curious that you should have brought up this subject, for only a moment before you came in I was thinking of a somewhat curious match which ultimately turned upon a question of the rule-book. It is true that, as far as the actual prize was concerned, it made little difference. But perhaps I had better tell you the whole story from the beginning."

The young man shifted uneasily in his chair.

"Well, you know, I've had a pretty rotten time this afternoon already——"

"I will call my story," said the Sage, tranquilly, "'The Long Hole,' for it involved the playing of what I am inclined to think must be the longest hole in the history of golf."

"I half promised to go and see a man——"

"But I will begin at the beginning," said the Sage. "I see that you are all impatience to hear the full details."

RALPH BINGHAM and Arthur Jukes (said the Oldest Member) had never been friends—their rivalry was too keen to admit of that—but it was not till Amelia Trivett came to stay at Leigh that a smouldering distaste for each other burst out into the flames of actual enmity. It is ever so. One of the poets, whose name I cannot recall, has a passage, which I am unable at the moment to remember, in one of his works, which for the time being has slipped my mind, which hits off admirably this age-old situation. The gist of his remarks is that lovely woman rarely fails to start something. In the weeks

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that followed her arrival, being in the same room with the two men was like dropping in on a reunion of Capulets and Montagues.

You see, Ralph and Arthur were so exactly equal in their skill on the links that life for them had for some time past resolved itself into a silent, bitter struggle in which first one, then the other, gained some slight advantage. If Ralph won the May medal by a stroke, Arthur would be one ahead in the June competition, only to be nosed out again in July. It was a state of affairs which, had they been men of a more generous stamp, would have bred a mutual respect, esteem, and even love. But I am sorry to say that, apart from their golf, which was in a class of its own as far as this neighbourhood was concerned, Ralph Bingham and Arthur Jukes were nothing less than a couple of unfortunate incidents. A sorry pair—and yet, mark you, far from lacking in mere superficial good looks. They were handsome fellows, both of them, and well aware of the fact; and when Amelia Trivett came to stay they simply straightened their ties, twirled their moustaches, and expected her to do the rest.

But here they were disappointed. Perfectly friendly though she was to both of them, the love-light was conspicuously absent from her beautiful eyes. And it was not long before each had come independently to a solution of this mystery. It was plain to them that the whole trouble lay in the fact that each neutralized the other's attractions. Arthur felt that, if he could only have a clear field, all would be over except the sending out of the wedding invitations; and Ralph was of opinion that, if he could just call on the girl one evening without finding the place all littered up with Arthur, his natural charms would swiftly bring home the bacon. And, indeed, it was true that they had no rivals except themselves. It happened at the moment that Leigh was extraordinarily short of eligible bachelors. We marry young in this delightful spot, and all the likely men were already paired off. It seemed that, if Amelia Trivett intended to get married, she would have to select either Ralph Bingham or Arthur Jukes. A dreadful choice.

IT had not occurred to me at the outset that my position in the affair would be anything closer than that of a detached and mildly interested spectator. Yet it was to me that Ralph came in his hour of need. When I returned home one evening, I found that my man had brought him in and laid him on the mat in my sitting-room.

I offered him a chair and a cigar, and he came to the point with commendable rapidity.

"Leigh," he said, directly he had lighted his cigar, "is too small for Arthur Jukes and myself."

"Ah, you have been talking it over and decided to move?" I said, delighted. "I think you are perfectly right. Leigh *is* over-built. Men like you and Jukes need a lot of space. Where do you think of going?"

"I'm not going."

"But I thought you said——"

"What I meant was that the time has come when one of us must leave."

"Oh, only one of you?" It was something, of course, but I confess I was disappointed, and I think my disappointment must have shown in my voice; for he looked at me, surprised.

"Surely you wouldn't mind Jukes going?" he said.

"Why, certainly not. He really is going, is he?"

A look of saturnine determination came into Ralph's face.

"He is. He thinks he isn't, but he is."

I failed to understand him, and said so. He looked cautiously about the room, as if to reassure himself that he could not be overheard.

"I suppose you've noticed," he said, "the disgusting way that man Jukes has been hanging round Miss Trivett, boring her to death?"

"I have seen them together sometimes."

"I love Amelia Trivett!" said Ralph.

"Poor girl!" I sighed.

"I beg your pardon?"

"Poor girl!" I said. "I mean, to have Arthur Jukes hanging round her."

"That's just what I think," said Ralph Bingham. "And that's why we're going to play this match."

"What match?"

"This match we've decided to play. I want you to act as one of the judges, to go along with Jukes and see that he doesn't play any of his tricks. You know what he is! And in a vital match like this——"

"How much are you playing for?"

"The whole world!"

"I beg your pardon?"

"The whole world. It amounts to that. The loser is to leave Leigh for good, and the winner stays on and marries Amelia Trivett. We have arranged all the details. Rupert Bailey will accompany me, acting as the other judge."

"And you want me to go round with Jukes?"

"Not round," said Ralph Bingham. "Along."

"What is the distinction?"

"We are not going to play a round. Only one hole."

"Sudden death, eh?"

" Not so very sudden. It's a longish hole. We start on the first tee here and hole out in the doorway of the Majestic Hotel in Royal Square. A distance, I imagine, of about sixteen miles."

I was revolted. About that time a perfect epidemic of freak matches had broken out in the club, and I had strongly opposed them from the start. George Willis had begun it by playing a medal round with the pro., George's first nine against the pro.'s complete eighteen. After that came the contest between Herbert Widgeon and Montague Brown, the latter, a twenty-four handicap man, being entitled to shout "Boo!" three times during the round at moments selected by himself. There had been many more of these degrading travesties on the sacred game, and I had writhed to see them. Playing freak golf-matches is to my mind like ragging a great classical melody. But of the whole collection this one, considering the sentimental interest and the magnitude of the stakes, seemed to me the most terrible. My face, I imagine, betrayed my disgust, for Bingham attempted extenuation.

" It's the only way," he said. " You know how Jukes and I are on the links. We are as level as two men can be. This, of course, is due to his extraordinary luck. Everybody knows that he is the world's champion fluker. I, on the other hand, invariably have the worst luck. The consequence is that in an ordinary round it is always a toss-up which of us wins. The test we propose will eliminate luck. After sixteen miles of give-and-take play, I am certain—that is to say, the better man is certain to be ahead. That is what I meant when I said that Arthur Jukes would shortly be leaving Leigh. Well, may I take it that you will consent to act as one of the judges ? "

I considered. After all, the match was likely to be historic, and one always feels tempted to hand one's name down to posterity.

" Very well," I said.

" Excellent. You will have to keep a sharp eye on Jukes, I need scarcely remind you. You will, of course, carry a book of the rules in your pocket and refer to them when you wish to refresh your memory. We start at daybreak, for, if we put it off till later, the course at the other end might be somewhat congested when we reached it. We want to avoid publicity as far as possible. If I took a full iron and hit a policeman, it would excite remark."

" It would. I can tell you the exact remark which it would excite."

" We shall take bicycles with us, to minimize the fatigue of covering the distance. Well, I am glad that we have your co-operation. At daybreak to-morrow on the first tee, and don't forget to bring your rules-book."

THE atmosphere brooding over the first tee, when I reached it on the following morning, somewhat resembled that of a duelling-ground in the days when these affairs were settled with rapiers or pistols. Rupert Bailey, an old friend of mine, was the only cheerful member of the party. I am never at my best in the early morning, and the two rivals glared at each other with silent sneers. I had never supposed till that moment that men ever really sneered at one another outside the movies, but these two were indisputably doing so. They were in the mood when men say " Pshaw ! "

They tossed for the honour, and Arthur Jukes, having won, drove off with a fine ball that landed well down the course. Ralph Bingham, having teed up, turned to Rupert Bailey.

" Go down on to the fairway of the seventeenth," he said. " I want you to mark my ball."

Rupert stared.

" The seventeenth ! "

" I am going to take that direction," said Ralph, pointing over the trees.

" But that will land your second or third shot in the lake."

" I have provided for that. I have a flat-bottomed boat moored close by the sixteenth green. I shall use a mashie-niblick and chip my ball aboard, row across to the other side, chip it ashore, and carry on. I propose to go across country as far as Woodfield. I think it will save me a stroke or two."

I gasped. I had never before realized the man's devilish cunning. His tactics gave him a flying start. Arthur, who had driven straight down the course, had as his objective the high road, which adjoins the waste ground beyond the first green. Once there, he would play the orthodox game by driving his ball along till he reached the bridge. While Arthur was winding along the high road, Ralph would have cut off practically two sides of a triangle. And it was hopeless for Arthur to imitate his enemy's tactics now. From where his ball lay he would have to cross a wide tract of marsh in order to reach the seventeenth fairway—an impossible feat. And, even if it had been feasible, he had no boat to take him across the water.

He uttered a violent protest. He was an unpleasant young man, almost—it seems absurd to say so, but almost as unpleasant as Ralph Bingham ; yet at the moment I am bound to say I sympathized with him.

"Ralph, having teed up, turned to Rupert. 'Go down on to the fairway of the seventeenth,' he said. 'I want you to mark my ball.'"

"What are you doing?" he demanded. "You can't play fast and loose with the rules like that."

"To what rule do you refer?" said Ralph, coldly.

"Well, that bally boat of yours is a hazard, isn't it? And you can't row a hazard about all over the place."

"Why not?"

The simple question seemed to take Arthur Jukes aback.

"Why not?" he repeated. "Why not? Well, you can't. That's why."

"There is nothing in the rules," said Ralph Bingham, "against moving a hazard. If a hazard can be moved without disturbing the ball, you are at liberty, I gather, to move it wherever you darned please. Besides,

what is all this about moving hazards ? I have a perfect right to go for a morning row, haven't I ? If I were to ask my doctor, he would probably actually recommend it. I am going to row my boat across the sound. If it happens to have my ball on board, that is not my affair. I shall not disturb my ball, and I shall play it from where it lies. Am I right in saying that the rules enact that the ball shall be played from where it lies ? "

We admitted that he was.

" Very well, then," said Ralph Bingham. " Don't let us waste any more time. We will wait for you at Woodfield."

He addressed his ball, and drove a beauty over the trees. It flashed out of sight in the direction of the seventeenth tee. Arthur and I made our way down the hill to play our second.

IT is a curious trait of the human mind that, however little personal interest one may have in the result, it is impossible to prevent oneself taking sides in any event of a competitive nature. I had embarked on this affair in a purely neutral spirit, not caring which of the two won and only sorry that both could not lose. Yet, as the morning wore on, I found myself almost unconsciously becoming distinctly pro-Jukes. I did not like the man. I objected to his face, his manners, and the colour of his tie. Yet there was something in the dogged way in which he struggled against adversity which touched me and won my grudging support. Many men, I felt, having been so outmanœuvred at the start, would have given up the contest in despair ; but Arthur Jukes, for all his defects, had the soul of a true golfer. He declined to give up. In grim silence he hacked his ball through the rough till he reached the high road ; and then, having played twenty-seven, set himself resolutely to propel it on its long journey.

It was a lovely morning, and, as I bicycled along, keeping a fatherly eye on Arthur's activities, I realized for the first time in my life the full meaning of that exquisite phrase of Coleridge :—

" Clothing the palpable and familiar
With golden exhalations of the dawn,"

for in the pellucid air everything seemed weirdly beautiful, even Arthur Jukes's heather-mixture knickerbockers, of which hitherto I had never approved. The sun gleamed on their seat, as he bent to make his shots, in a cheerful and almost a poetic way. The birds were singing gaily in the hedgerows, and such was my uplifted state that I, too, burst into song, until Arthur petulantly desired me to refrain, on the plea that, though he yielded to no man in his enjoyment of farmyard imitations in their proper place, I put him off his stroke. And so we passed through Bayside in silence and started to cover that long stretch of road which ends in the railway bridge and the gentle descent into Woodfield.

ARTHUR was not doing badly. He was at least keeping them straight. And in the circumstances straightness was to be preferred to distance. Soon after leaving Little Hadley he had become ambitious and had used his brassy with disastrous results, slicing his fifty-third into the rough on the right of the road. It had taken him ten with the niblick to get back on to the car tracks, and this had taught him prudence.

He was now using his putter for every shot, and, except when he got trapped in the cross-lines at the top of the hill just before reaching Bayside, he had been in no serious difficulties. He was playing a nice easy game, getting the full face of the putter on to each shot.

At the top of the slope that drops down into Woodfield High Street he paused.

" I think I might try my brassy again here," he said. " I have a nice lie."

" Is it wise ? " I said.

He looked down the hill.

" What I was thinking," he said, " was that with it I might wing that man Bingham. I see he is standing right out in the middle of the fairway."

I followed his gaze. It was perfectly true. Ralph Bingham was leaning on his bicycle in the roadway, smoking a cigarette. Even at this distance one could detect the man's disgustingly complacent expression. Rupert Bailey was sitting with his back against the door of the Woodfield Garage, looking rather used up. He was a man who liked to keep himself clean and tidy, and it was plain that the cross-country trip had done him no good. He seemed to be scraping mud off his face. I learned later that he had had the misfortune to fall into a ditch just beyond Bayside.

" No," said Arthur. " On second thoughts, the safe game is the one to play. I'll stick to the putter."

We dropped down the hill, and presently came up with the opposition. I had not been mistaken in thinking that Ralph Bingham looked complacent. The man was smirking.

" Playing three hundred and ninety-six," he said, as we drew near. " How are you ? "

I consulted my score-card.

" We have played a snappy seven hundred and eleven," I said.

Ralph exulted openly. Rupert Bailey

made no comment. He was too busy with the alluvial deposits on his person.

"Perhaps you would like to give up the match?" said Ralph to Arthur.

"Tchah!" said Arthur.

"Might just as well."

"Pah!" said Arthur.

"You can't win now."

"Pshaw!" said Arthur.

I am aware that Arthur's dialogue might have been brighter, but he had been through a trying time.

Rupert Bailey sidled up to me.

"I'm going home," he said.

"Nonsense!" I replied. "You are in an official capacity. You must stick to your post. Besides, what could be nicer than a pleasant morning ramble?"

"Pleasant morning ramble my number nine foot!" he replied, peevishly. "I want to get back to civilization and set an excavating party with pickaxes to work on me."

"You take too gloomy a view of the matter. You are a little dusty. Nothing more."

"And it's not only the being buried alive that I mind. I cannot stick Ralph Bingham much longer."

"You have found him trying?"

"Trying! Why, after I had fallen into that ditch and was coming up for the third time, all the man did was simply to call to me to admire an infernal iron shot he had just made. No sympathy, mind you! Wrapped up in himself. Why don't you make your man give up the match? He can't win."

"I refuse to admit it. Much may happen between here and Royal Square."

I have seldom known a prophecy more swiftly fulfilled. At this moment the doors of the Woodfield Garage opened and a small car rolled out with a grimy young man in a sweater at the wheel. He brought the machine out into the road, and alighted and went back into the garage, where we heard him shouting unintelligibly to someone in the rear premises. The car remained puffing and panting against the kerb.

Engaged in conversation with Rupert Bailey, I was paying little attention to this evidence of an awakening world, when suddenly I heard a hoarse, triumphant cry from Arthur Jukes, and, turning, I perceived his ball dropping neatly into the car's interior. Arthur himself, brandishing a niblick, was dancing about the fairway.

"Now what about your moving hazards?" he cried.

At this moment the man in the sweater returned, carrying a spanner. Arthur Jukes sprang towards him.

"I'll give you five pounds to drive me to Royal Square," he said.

I do not know what the sweater-clad young man's engagements for the morning had been originally, but nothing could have been more obliging than the ready way in which he consented to revise them at a moment's notice. I dare say you have noticed that the sturdy peasantry of our beloved land respond to an offer of five pounds as to a bugle-call.

"You're on," said the youth.

"Good!" said Arthur Jukes.

"You think you're darned clever," said Ralph Bingham.

"I know it," said Arthur.

"Well, then," said Ralph, "perhaps you will tell us how you propose to get the ball out of the car when you reach Royal Square?"

"Certainly," replied Arthur. "You will observe on the side of the vehicle a convenient handle which, when turned, opens the door. The door thus opened, I shall chip my ball out!"

"I see," said Ralph. "Yes, I never thought of that."

THERE was something in the way the man spoke that I did not like. His mildness seemed to me suspicious. He had the air of a man who has something up his sleeve. I was still musing on this when Arthur called to me impatiently to get in. I did so, and we drove off. Arthur was in great spirits. He had ascertained from the young man at the wheel that there was no chance of the opposition being able to hire another car at the garage. This machine was his own property, and the only other one at present in the shop was suffering from complicated trouble of the oiling-system and would not be able to be moved for at least another day.

I, however, shook my head when he pointed out the advantages of his position. I was still wondering about Ralph.

"I don't like it," I said.

"Don't like what?"

"Ralph Bingham's manner."

"Of course not," said Arthur. "Nobody does. There have been complaints on all sides."

"I mean, when you told him how you intended to get the ball out of the car."

"What was the matter with him?"

"He was too—ha!"

"How do you mean he was too—ha?"

"I have it!"

"What?"

"I see the trap he was laying for you. It has just dawned on me. No wonder he didn't object to your opening the door and chipping the ball out. By doing so you would forfeit the match."

"Nonsense! Why?"

" Because," I said, " it is against the rules to tamper with a hazard. If you had got into a sand-bunker, would you smooth away the sand ? If you had put your shot under a tree, could your caddie hold up the branches to give you a clear shot ? Obviously you would disqualify yourself if you touched that door."

Arthur's jaw dropped.

"What! Then how the deuce am I to get it out ? "

" That," I said, gravely, "is a question between you and your Maker."

It was here that Arthur Jukes forfeited the sympathy which I had begun to feel for him. A crafty, sinister look came into his eyes.

" Listen ! " he said. " It'll take them an hour to catch up with us. Suppose, during that time, that door happened to open accidentally, as it were, and close again ? You wouldn't think it necessary to mention the fact, eh ? You would be a good fellow and keep your mouth shut, yes ? You might even see your way to go so far as to back me up in a statement to the effect that I hooked it out with my—— ? "

I was revolted.

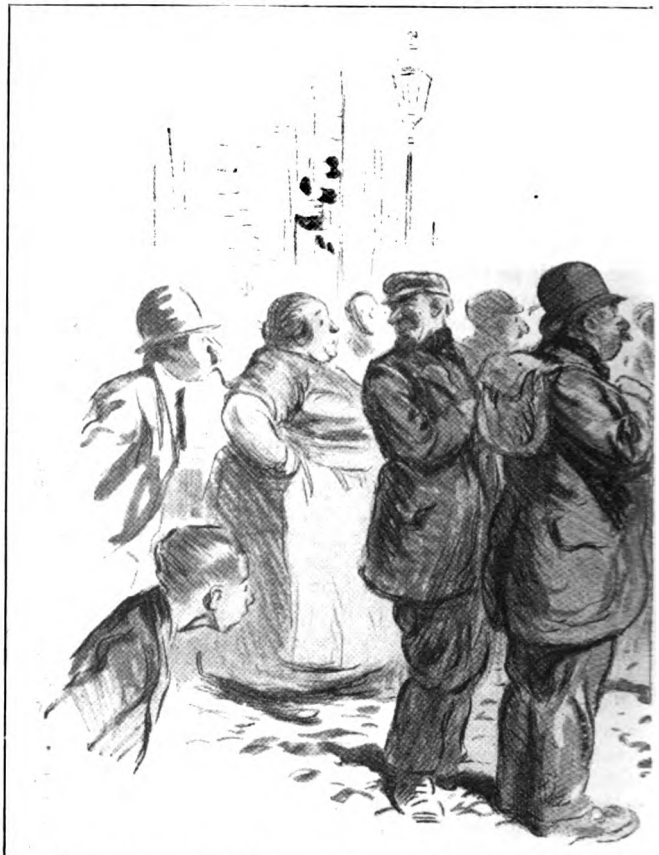
" I am a golfer," I said, coldly, "and I obey the rules."

' Yes, but——"

" Those rules were drawn up by——"—I bared my head reverently—" by the Committee of the Royal and Ancient at St. Andrews. I have always respected them, and I shall not deviate on this occasion from the policy of a lifetime."

Arthur Jukes relapsed into a moody silence. He broke it once, crossing the West Street Bridge, to observe that he would like to know if I called myself a friend of his—a question which I was able to answer with a whole-hearted negative. After that he did not speak till the car drew up in front of the Majestic Hotel in Royal Square.

Early as the hour was, a certain bustle and animation already prevailed in that centre of the city, and the spectacle of a man in a golf-coat and plus-four knickerbockers hacking with a niblick at the floor of a car was not long in collecting a crowd of some dimensions. Three messenger-boys, four typists, and a gentleman in full evening-dress, who obviously possessed or was friendly with someone who possessed a large private cellar, formed the nucleus of it ; and they were joined about the time when Arthur addressed the ball in order to play his nine hundred and fifteenth by six newsboys, eleven charladies, and perhaps a dozen assorted loafers, all speculating with the liveliest interest as to which particular asylum had had the honour of sheltering Arthur before he had contrived to elude the vigilance of his custodians.



' The spectacle of a man in a golf-coat and plus-four of a car was not long in

Arthur had prepared for some such contingency. He suspended his activities with the niblick, and drew from his pocket a large poster, which he proceeded to hang over the side of the car. It read :—

COME
TO
McCLURG AND MACDONALD,
18, WEST STREET,
FOR
ALL GOLFING SUPPLIES.

His knowledge of psychology had not misled him. Directly they gathered that he was advertising something, the crowd declined to look at it; they melted away, and Arthur returned to his work in solitude.

He was taking a well-earned rest after playing his eleven hundred and fifth, a nice

knickerbockers hacking with a niblick at the floor collecting a crowd."

niblick shot with lots of wrist behind it, when out of Bridle Street there trickled a weary-looking golf-ball, followed in the order named by Ralph Bingham, resolute but going a trifle at the knees, and Rupert Bailey on a bicycle. The latter, on whose face and limbs the mud had dried, made an arresting spectacle.

"What are you playing?" I inquired.

"Eleven hundred," said Rupert. "We got into a casual dog."

"A casual dog?"

"Yes, just before the bridge. We were coming along nicely, when a stray dog grabbed our nine hundred and ninety-eighth and took it nearly back to Woodfield, and we had to start all over again. How are you getting on?"

"We have just played our eleven hundred and fifth. A nice even game." I looked at Ralph's ball, which was lying close to the kerb. "You are farther from the hole, I think. Your shot, Bingham."

Rupert Bailey suggested breakfast. He was a man who was altogether too fond of creature comforts. He had not the true golfing spirit.

"Breakfast!" I exclaimed.

"Breakfast," said Rupert, firmly. "If you don't know what it is, I can teach you in half a minute. You play it with a pot of coffee, a knife and fork, and about a hundred-weight of scrambled eggs. Try it. It's a pastime that grows on you."

I was surprised when Ralph Bingham supported the suggestion. He was so near holing out that I should have supposed that nothing would have kept him from finishing the match. But he agreed heartily.

"Breakfast," he said, "is an excellent idea. You go along in. I'll follow in a moment. I want to buy a paper."

We went into the hotel, and a few minutes later he joined us. Now that we were actually at the table, I confess that the idea of breakfast was by no means repugnant to me. The keen air and the exercise had given me an appetite, and it was some little time before I was able to assure the waiter definitely that he could cease bringing orders of scrambled eggs. The others having

finished also, I suggested a move. I was anxious to get the match over and be free to go home.

We filed out of the hotel, Arthur Jukes leading. When I had passed through the swing-doors, I found him gazing perplexedly up and down the street.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"It's gone!"

"What has gone?"

"The car!"

"Oh, the car?" said Ralph Bingham. "That's all right. Didn't I tell you about that? I bought it just now and engaged the driver as my chauffeur. I've been meaning to buy a car for a long time. A man ought to have a car."

"Where is it?" said Arthur, blankly. The man seemed dazed.

"I couldn't tell you to a mile or two," replied Ralph. "I told the man to drive to Glasgow. Why? Had you any message for him?"

"But my ball was inside it!"

"Now that," said Ralph, "is really unfortunate! Do you mean to tell me you hadn't managed to get it out yet? Yes, that *is* a little awkward for you. I'm afraid it means that you lose the match."

"Lose the match?"

"Certainly. The rules are perfectly definite on that point. A period of five minutes is allowed for each stroke. The player who fails to make his stroke within that time loses the hole. Unfortunate, but there it is!"

Arthur Jukes sank down on the path and buried his face in his hands. He had the appearance of a broken man. Once more, I am bound to say, I felt a certain pity for him. He had certainly struggled gamely, and it was hard to be beaten like this on the post.

"Playing eleven hundred and one," said Ralph Bingham, in his odiously self-satisfied voice, as he addressed his ball. He laughed jovially. A messenger-boy had paused close by and was watching the proceedings gravely. Ralph Bingham patted him on the head.

"Well, sonny," he said, "what club would *you* use here?"

"I claim the match!" cried Arthur Jukes, springing up. Ralph Bingham regarded him coldly.

"I beg your pardon?"

"I claim the match!" repeated Arthur Jukes. "The rules say that a player who asks advice from any person other than his caddie shall lose the hole."

"This is absurd!" said Ralph, but I noticed that he had turned pale.

"I appeal to the judges."

"We sustain the appeal," I said, after a brief consultation with Rupert Bailey. "The rule is perfectly clear."

"But you had lost the match already by not playing within five minutes," said Ralph, vehemently.

"It was not my turn to play. You were farther from the pin."

"Well, play now. Go on! Let's see you make your shot."

"There is no necessity," said Arthur, frigidly. "Why should I play when you have already disqualified yourself?"

"I claim a draw!"

"I deny the claim."

"I appeal to the judges."

"Very well. We will leave it to the judges."

I consulted with Rupert Bailey. It seemed to me that Arthur Jukes was entitled to the verdict. Rupert, who, though an amiable and delightful companion, had always been one of Nature's fat-heads, could not see it. We had to go back to our principals and announce that we had been unable to agree.

"This is ridiculous," said Ralph Bingham. "We ought to have had a third judge."

At this moment, who should come out of the hotel but Amelia Trivett! A veritable goddess from the machine.

"It seems to me," I said, "that you would both be well advised to leave the decision to Miss Trivett. You could have no better referee."

"I'm game," said Arthur Jukes.

"Suits *me*," said Ralph Bingham.

"Why, what ever are you all doing here with your golf-clubs?" asked the girl, wonderingly.

"These two gentlemen," I explained, "have been playing a match, and a point has arisen on which the judges do not find themselves in agreement. We need an unbiased outside opinion, and we should like to put it up to you. The facts are as follows."

Amelia Trivett listened attentively, but, when I had finished, she shook her head.

"I'm afraid I don't know enough about the game to be able to decide a question like that," she said.

"Then we must consult St. Andrews," said Rupert Bailey.

"I'll tell you who might know," said Amelia Trivett, after a moment's thought.

"Who is that?" I asked.

"My *fiancé*. He has just come back from a golfing holiday. That's why I'm in town this morning. I've been to meet him. He is very good at golf. He won a medal at Little-Mudbury-in-the-Wold the day before he left."

"'Why, what ever are you all doing here with your golf-clubs?' asked Amelia, wonderingly."

There was a tense silence. I had the delicacy not to look at Ralph or Arthur. Then the silence was broken by a sharp crack. Ralph Bingham had broken his mashie-niblick across his knee. From the direction where Arthur Jukes was standing there came a muffled gulp.

"Shall I ask him?" said Amelia Trivett.

"Don't bother," said Ralph Bingham.

"It doesn't matter," said Arthur Jukes.

WHEN THE DRAMA WAS DRAMA

by

Stephen Leacock

COMING home the other night in my car I heard a straphanger say, "The drama is just turning into a bunch of talk." This set me thinking; and I was glad that it did. Some days I never think from morning till night.

This decline of the drama is a thing on which I feel deeply and bitterly, for I am, or I have been, something of an actor myself. I have only been in amateur work, I admit, but still I have played some mighty interesting parts. I have acted in Shakespeare as *A Citizen*, I have been *A Fairy* in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and I was once one end of a camel in a pantomime. I have had other parts, too, such as *A Voice Speaks from Within*, or *A Voice is Heard Without*, or *A Bell Rings from Behind*, and a lot of things like that. I played as *A Noise* for seven nights before crowded houses; and I have been *A Groan* and *A Sigh* and *A Tumult*, and once I was *A Vision Passes Before the Sleeper*.

So when I talk of acting and of the Spirit of the Drama, I speak of what I know.

Naturally, too, I was brought into contact, very often into quite intimate personal contact, with some of the greatest actors of the day. I don't say it in any way of boasting, but merely because to those of us who love the stage all dramatic souvenirs are interesting. I remember, for example, that when Wilson Barrett played "The Bat," and had to wear the queer suit with the scales, it was I who put the glue on him. And I recall a conversation with Sir Henry Irving one night when he said to me: "Fetch me a glass of water, will you?" and I said, "Sir Henry, it is not only a pleasure to get it, but it is to me, as a humble devotee of the art that you have ennobled, a high privilege. I will go further——"

"Do," he said. Henry was like that, quick, sympathetic, what we call in French, vibrant.

Forbes-Robertson I shall never forget; he owes me half a crown. And as for Martin Harvey—I simply cannot call him Sir John, we are such dear old friends—he never comes to town without at once calling in my services to lend a hand in his production. No doubt everybody knows that splendid play in which he appears, called "The Breed of the Treshams." There is a torture scene in it, a most gruesome thing. Harvey, as the hero, has to be tortured, not on the stage itself, but in a little room off the stage. You can hear him howling as he is tortured. Well, it was I who was torturing him. We are so used to working together that Harvey didn't want to let anybody do it but me.

"I was once one end of a camel."

So, naturally, I am a keen friend and student of the Drama. And I hate to think of it going all to pieces.

The trouble with it is that it is becoming a mere mass of conversation and reflection: nothing happens in it: the action is all going out of it and there is

nothing left but thought. When actors begin to think it is time for a change. They are not fitted for it.

Now, in my day, I mean when I was at the apogee of my reputation (I think that is the

To know at a glance the Hero, the Villain, the Villainess, and the Heroine was simplicity itself in the Old Drama, but——

word; it may be apologee: I forget), things were different. What we wanted was action —striking, climatic, catastrophic action, in which things not only happened but happened suddenly and all in a lump.

And we always took care that the action happened in some place that was worth while, not simply in an ordinary room with ordinary furniture, the way it is in the New Drama. The scene was laid in a Lighthouse (top storey), or in a Mad House (at midnight), or in a Power House or a Dog House or a Bath House, in short, in some place with a distinct local colour and atmosphere.

I remember in the case of one of the first plays I ever wrote (I *write* plays too), the manager to whom I submitted it said: "What are you doing for atmosphere?" "The opening act," I said, "is in a steam laundry." "Very good," he answered, as he turned over the pages, "and you brought in a condemned cell?" I told him that I had not. "That's rather unfortunate," he said, "because we are especially anxious to bring in a condemned cell. Three of the big theatres have got them this season, and I think we ought to have it in: can you do it?" "Yes," I said, "I can, if it's wanted; I'll look through the cast and no doubt I can find one at least of them that ought to be put to death." "Yes, yes," said the manager, enthusiastically, "I am sure you can."

But I think of all the settings that we used, the Lighthouse plays were the best. There is something about a lighthouse that you do not get in a modern drawing-room. What it is, I don't know; but there's a difference.

There is something about a lighthouse—the way you see it in the earlier scenes—with the lantern shining out over the black waters, that suggests security, fidelity, faithfulness to a trust. The stage used generally to be dim in the first part of a lighthouse play, and you could see the huddled figures of the

——which is which in the New Drama?

fishermen and their wives on the foreshore pointing out to the sea (the back of the stage). "See," one cried, with his arm extended, "there is lightning in yon sky" (I was the lightning and that my cue for it): "God help all the poor souls at sea to-night!"

Then a woman cried, "Look! Look! a boat upon the reef!" And as she said it I had to rush round and work the boat to make it go up and down properly. Then there was more lightning, and someone screamed out, "Look! See! there's a woman in the boat!" There wasn't really; it was me; but in the darkness it was all the same, and, of course, the heroine herself couldn't be there yet because she had to be downstairs getting dressed to be drowned. Then they all cried out, "Poor soul! She's doomed!" and all the fishermen ran up and down making a noise. Fishermen in those plays used to get fearfully excited; and with the excitement and the darkness and the bright beams of the lighthouse falling on the oilskins, and the thundering of the sea upon the reef—ah! me, those were the plays! That was acting! And to think that there isn't a single streak of lightning in any play on the boards this year!

"A man staggers into the room, in oilskins."

And then the kind of climax that a play like this used to have! The scene shifted right at the moment of the excitement, and lo! we are in the tower, the top storey of the lighthouse, interior scene. All is still and quiet within, with the bright light of the reflectors flooding the little room, and the roar of the storm heard like muffled thunder outside. The lighthouse-keeper trims his lamps. How firm and quiet and rugged he looks. The snows of sixty winters are on his head, but his eye is clear and his grip strong. Hear the howl of the wind as he opens the door, and steps forth upon the iron balcony, eighty feet above the water, and peers out upon the storm. "God pity all the poor souls at sea!" he says. (They all say that; if you get used to it, and get to like it, you *want* to hear it said, no matter how often they say it.) The waves rage beneath him; the foaming crest of a wave splashes up angrily at him. (I threw it at him, really, but the effect was wonderful.)

And then as he comes in from the storm to the still room, the climax breaks. A man staggers into the room, in oilskins, drenched, wet, breathless! (They all staggered in these plays; and in the New Drama they walk, and the effect is feebleness itself.) He points to the sea. "**A boat!** A boat upon the reef! with a woman in it!"

And the lighthouse-keeper knows that it is his only daughter—the only one that he has—who is being cast to death upon the reef. Then comes the dilemma. They want him for the life-boat; no one can take it through the surf but him. You know that because the other man says so himself. But if he goes in the boat then the great light will go out. Untended it cannot live in the storm. And if it goes out—Ah! if it goes out!—ask of the angry waves and the resounding rocks what to-night's long toll of death must be without the light?

I wish you could have seen it—you who only see the drawing-room plays of to-day—the scene when the lighthouse man draws himself up, calm and resolute, and says, "My place is here; God's will be done." And you know that as he says it and turns quietly to his lamps again, the boat is drifting, at that very moment, to the rocks.

"How did they save her?" My dear sir, if you can ask that question you little understand the drama as it was. Save her? No, of course they didn't save her. What we wanted in the Old Drama was reality and force, no matter how wild and tragic it might be. They did not save her. They found her the next day, in the concluding scene—all that was left of her when she was dashed upon the rocks. Her ribs were broken. Her bottom boards had been smashed in, her gunwale was gone—in short, she was a wreck.

The girl? Oh, yes, certainly they saved the girl. That kind of thing was always taken care of. You see, just as the lighthouse man said, "God's will be done," his eye fell on a long coil of rope hanging there. Providentially, wasn't it? But then we were not ashamed to use Providence in the Old Drama. So he made a noose in it and threw it over the balcony and hauled the girl up on it. I used to hook her on to it every night.

A rotten play? Oh, I am sure it must have been. But, somehow, those of us who were brought up on that sort of thing, still sigh for it.

THE FOUR JUST MEN

IV.

The Man Who Died Twice

By EDGAR WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY E. VERPILLEUX

THE interval between Acts II. and III. was an unusually long one, and the three men who sat in the stage-box were in such harmony of mind that none of them felt the necessity for making conversation. The piece was a conventional crook play, and each of the three had solved the "mystery" of the murder before the drop fell on the first act. They had reached the same solution (and the right one), without any great mental effort.

Fare, the Police Commissioner, had dined with George Manfred and Leon Gonsalez (he addressed them respectively as "Señor Fuentes" and "Señor Mandrelino," and did not doubt that they were natives of Spain, despite their faultless English), and the party had come on to the theatre.

Mr. Fare frowned as at some unpleasant memory, and heard a soft laugh. Looking up, he met the dancing eyes of Leon.

"Why do you laugh?" he asked, half smiling in sympathy.

"At your thoughts," replied the calm Gonsalez.

"At my thoughts!" repeated the other, startled.

"Yes," Leon nodded; "you were thinking of The Four Just Men."

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed Fare. "It is perfectly true. What is it?—telepathy?"

Gonsalez shook his head. As to Manfred, he was gazing abstractedly into the stalls.

"No, it was not telepathy," said Leon, "it was your facial expression."

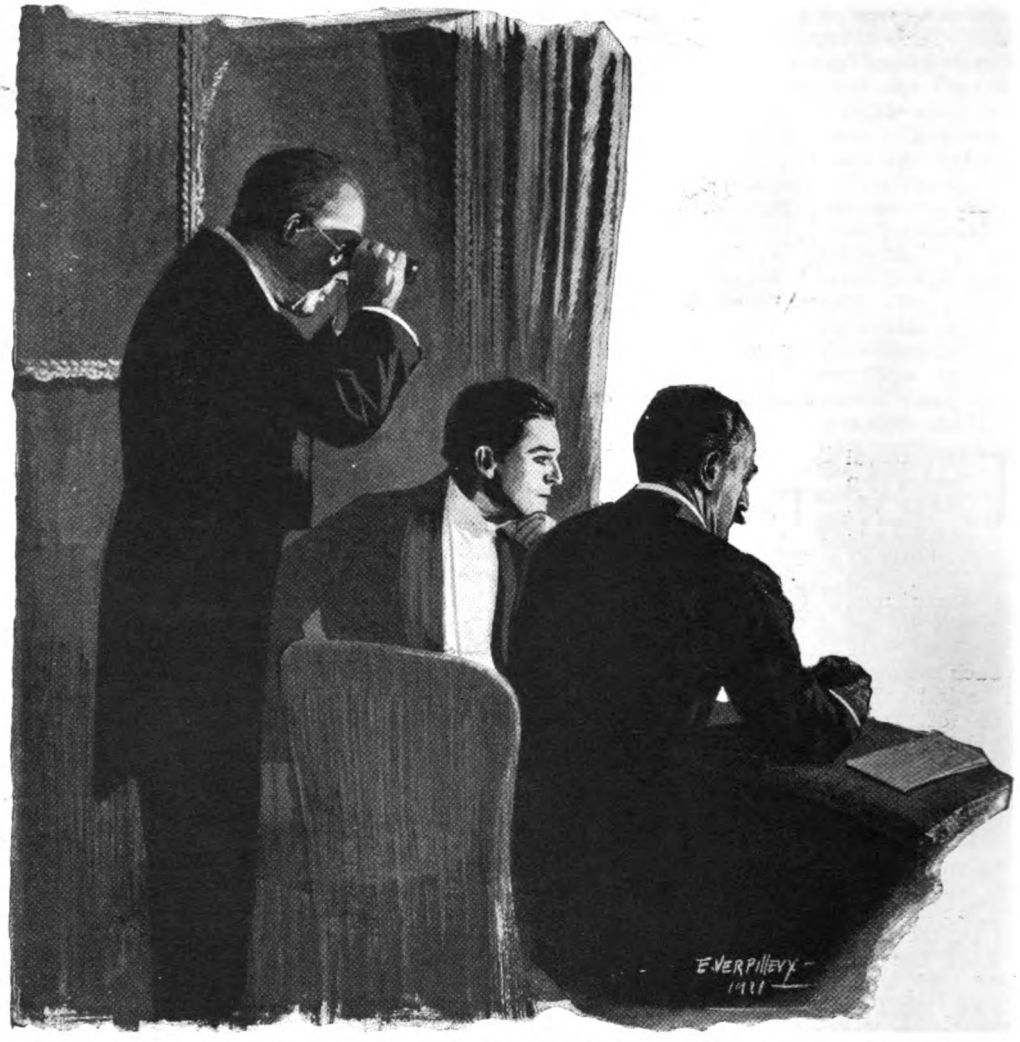
"But I haven't mentioned those rascals. How——"

"Facial expression," said Leon, revelling in his pet topic, "especially an expression of the emotions, comes into the category of primitive instincts—they are not 'willed.' For example, when a billiard player strikes a ball he throws and twists his body after the ball—you must have seen the contortions of a player who has missed his shot by a narrow margin? A man using scissors works his jaw—a rower moves his lips with every stroke of the oar. These are what we call 'automatisms.' Animals have these characteristics. A hungry dog approaching meat pricks his ears in the direction of his meal——"

"Is there a particular act of automatism produced by the thought of The Four Just Men?" asked the Commissioner, smiling.

Leon nodded.

"It would take long to describe, but I will not deceive you. I less read than guessed your thoughts by following them. The last line in the last act we saw was uttered by a ridiculous stage parson, who says: 'Justice! There is a justice beyond the law!' And I saw you frown. And then you looked across the stalls and nodded to the editor of the *Megaphone*. And I remembered that you had written an article on The Four Just Men for that journal——"



" Leon raised his powerful opera-glassses and surveyed the man whom his friend had indicated.

" A little biography on poor Falmouth, who died the other day," corrected Fare.

" Yes, yes, I see. You were right, of course. I was thinking of them and their pretensions to act as judges and executioners when the law fails to punish the guilty, or rather the guilty succeed in avoiding conviction."

Manfred turned suddenly.

" Leon "—he spoke in Spanish, in which language the three had been conversing off and on during the evening—" view the cavalier with the diamond in his shirt—what do you make of him ? " The question was in English.

Leon raised his powerful opera-glasses and surveyed the man whom his friend had indicated.

" I should like to hear him speak," he said, after a while. " See how delicate his face is and how powerful are his jaws—almost prognathic, for the upper maxilla is distinctly arrested. Regard him, Señor, and tell me if you do not agree that his eyes are unusually bright ? "

Manfred took the glasses and looked at the unconscious man.

" They are swollen—yes, I see they are bright."

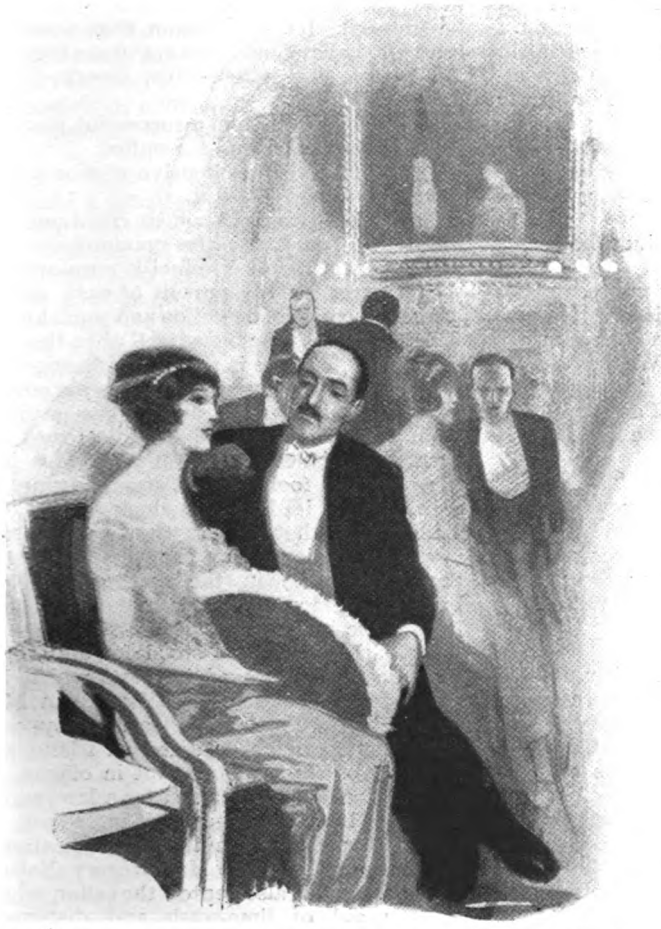
" What else do you see ? "

" The lips are large and a little swollen, too, I think," said Manfred.

Leon took the glasses and turned to the Commissioner.

" I do not bet, but if I did I would wager a thousand pesetas that this man speaks with a harsh, cracked voice."

Fare looked from his companion to the object of their scrutiny and then back to Leon.



'I should like to hear him speak,' he said, after a while."

" You are perfectly right," he said, quietly. " His name is Ballam, and his voice is extraordinarily rough and harsh. What is he ? "

" Vicious," replied Gonsalez. " My dear friend, that man is vicious, a bad man. Beware of the bright eyes and the cracked voice, Señor ! They stand for evil ! "

Fare rubbed his nose irritably, a trick of his.

" If you were anybody else I should be very rude and say that you knew him or had met him," he said, " but after your extraordinary demonstration the other day I realize there must be something in physiognomy."

He referred to a visit which Leon Gonsalez and Manfred had paid to the record department of Scotland Yard. There, with forty photographs of criminals spread upon the table before him, Gonsalez, taking them in order, had enumerated the crimes with which their names were associated. He only made four errors, and even they were very excusable."

" Yes, Gregory Ballam is a pretty bad lot," said the Commissioner, thoughtfully. " He has never been through our hands, but that is the luck of the game. He's as shrewd as the devil, and it hurts me to see him with a nice girl like Genee Maggiore."

" The girl who is sitting with him ? " asked Manfred, interested.

" An actress, " murmured Gonsalez. " You observe, my dear George, how she turns her head first to the left and then to the right at intervals, though there is no attraction in either direction. She has the habit of being seen—it is not vanity, it is merely a peculiar symptom of her profession."

" What is his favourite vanity ? " asked Manfred, and the Commissioner smiled.

" You know our Dickens, eh ? " he asked, for he thought of Manfred as a Spaniard. " Well, it would be difficult to tell you what Gregory Ballam does to earn his respectable income," he said, more seriously. " I think he is connected with a money-lender's business and runs a few profitable side-lines."

" Such as—— ? " suggested Manfred.

Mr. Fare was not, apparently, anxious to commit himself.

" I'll tell you in the strictest confidence," he said. " We believe, and have good cause to believe, that he has a hop joint which is frequented by wealthy people. Did you read last week about the man, John Bidworth, who shot a nursemaid in Kensington Gardens and then shot himself ? "

Manfred nodded.

" He was quite a well-connected person, wasn't he ? " he asked.

" He was very well connected," replied Fare, emphatically. " So well connected that we did not want to bring his people into

the case at all. He died the next day in hospital, and the surgeons tell us that he was undoubtedly under the influence of some Indian drug, and that in his few moments of consciousness he as much as told the surgeon in charge of the case that he had been on a jag the night before and had finished up in what he called an opium house, and remembered nothing further till he woke up in the hospital. He died without knowing that he had committed this atrocious crime. There is no doubt that under the maddening influence of the drug he shot the first person he saw."

"Was it Mr. Ballam's opium house?" asked Gonsalez, interested.

The curtain rose at that moment and conversation went on in a whisper.

"We don't know—in his delirium he mentioned Ballam's name. We have tried our best to find out. He has been watched. Places at which he has stayed any length of time have been visited, but we have found nothing to incriminate him."

LEON GONSALEZ had a favourite hour and a favourite meal at which he was at his brightest. That hour was at nine o'clock in the morning, and the meal was breakfast. He put down his paper the next morning and asked:—

"What is crime?"

"Professor," said Manfred, solemnly, "I will tell you. It is the departure from the set rules which govern human society."

"You are conventional," said Gonsalez. "My dear George, you are always conventional at nine o'clock in the morning! Now, had I asked you at midnight you would have told me that it is any act which wilfully offends and discomforts your neighbour. If I desired to give it a narrow, and what they call in this country a legal, interpretation, I would add, 'contrary to the law.' There must be ten thousand crimes committed for every one detected. People associate crime only with those offences which are committed by a certain type of illiterate or semi-illiterate lunatic or half-lunatic, glibly dubbed a 'criminal.' Now, here is a villainous crime, a monumental crime. Here is a man who is destroying the souls of youth and breaking hearts ruthlessly! Here is one who is dragging down men and women from the upward road and debasing them in their own eyes, slaying ambition and all beauty of soul and mind in order that he should live in a certain comfort, wearing a clean dress shirt every evening of his life and drinking expensive and unnecessary wines with his expensive and indigestible dinner."

"Where is this man?" asked Manfred.

"He lives at 993, Jermyn Street—in fact, he is a neighbour," said Leon.

"You're speaking of Mr. Ballam?"

"I'm speaking of Mr. Ballam," said Gonsalez, gravely. "To-night I am going to be a foreign artist with large rolls of money in my pockets and an irresistible desire to be amused. I do not doubt that sooner or later Mr. Ballam and I will gravitate together. Do I look like a detective, George?" he asked, abruptly.

"You look more like a successful pianist," said George, and Gonsalez sniffed.

"You can even be offensive at nine o'clock in the morning," he said.

There are two risks which criminals face (with due respect to the opinions of Leon Gonsalez, this word criminal is employed by the narrator) in the pursuit of easy wealth. There is the risk of detection and punishment, which applies to the big as well as to the little delinquent. There is the risk of losing large sums of money invested for the purpose of securing even larger sums. The criminal who puts money in his business runs the least risk of detection. That is why only the poor and foolish come stumbling up the stairs which lead to the dock at the Old Bailey, and that is why the big men, who would be indignant at the very suggestion that they were in the category of law-breakers, seldom or never make their little bow to the judge.

Mr. Gregory Ballam stood for and represented certain moneyed interests which had purchased at auction three houses in Montagu Street, Portland Place. They were three houses which occupied an island site. The first of these was let out in offices, the ground floor being occupied by a lawyer, the first floor by a wine and spirit merchant, the third being a very plain suite, dedicated to the business hours of Mr. Gregory Ballam. This gentleman also rented the cellar, which, by the aid of lime-wash and distemper, had been converted into, if not a pleasant, at any rate a neat and cleanly storage place. Through this cellar you could reach (amongst other places) a brand-new garage, which had been built for one of Mr. Ballam's partners, but in which Mr. Ballam was not interested at all.

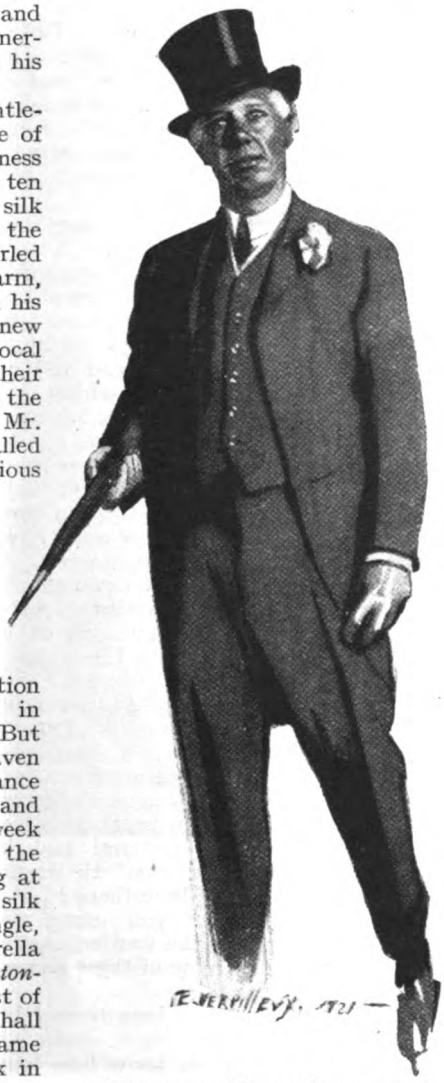
None but the workmen who had been employed in renovation knew that it was possible also to walk from one house to the other, either through the door in the cellar, which had existed when the houses were purchased, or through a new door in Mr. Ballam's office.

The third house, that at the end of the island site, was occupied by the International Artists' Club, and the police had never followed Mr. Ballam there, because Mr. Ballam had never gone there, at least not by the front door. The Artists' Club had a "rest room," and there were times when

Mr. Ballam had appeared, as if by magic, in that room, had met a select little party, and had conducted them through a well-concealed pass-door to the ground floor of the middle house. The middle house was the most respectable-looking of the three. It had neat muslin curtains at all its windows, and was occupied by a venerable gentleman and his wife.

The venerable gentleman made a practice of going out to business every morning at ten o'clock, his shiny silk hat set jauntily on the side of his head, a furled umbrella under his arm, and a button-hole in his coat. The police knew him by sight, and local constables touched their helmets to him. In the days gone by, when Mr. Raymond, as he called himself, had a luxurious white beard and earned an elegant income by writing begging letters and interviewing credulous and sympathetic females, he did not have that name or the reputation which he enjoyed in Montagu Street. But now he was clean-shaven and had the appearance of a retired admiral, and he received £4 a week for going out of the house every morning at ten o'clock, with his silk hat set at a rakish angle, and his furled umbrella and his neat little *boutonnière*. He spent most of the day in the Guildhall reading-room, and came back at five o'clock in the evening as jaunty as ever.

And his day's work being ended, he and his hard-faced wife went to their little attic room and played cribbage, and their language was certainly jaunty, but was not venerable.



"The venerable gentleman made a pretence of going out to business every morning at ten o'clock, his shiny silk hat set jauntily on the side of his head."

On the first floor, behind triple black velvet curtains, men and women smoked day and night. It was a large room, being two rooms which had been converted into one, and it had been decorated under Mr. Ballam's eye. In this room nothing but opium was smoked. If you had a fancy for hashish you indulged yourself in a basement apartment. Sometimes Mr. Ballam himself came to take a whiff of the dream-herb, but he usually reserved these visits for such occasions as the introduction of a new and profitable client. The pipe had no ill-effect upon Mr. Ballam. That was his boast. He boasted now to a new client, a rich Spanish artist, who had been picked up by one of his jackals and piloted to the International Artists' Club.

"Nor on me," said the newcomer, waving away a yellow-faced Chinaman who ministered to the needs of the smokers. "I always bring my own smoke."

Ballam leant forward curiously as the man took a silver box from his pocket and produced therefrom a green and sticky-looking pill.

"What is that?" asked Ballam, curiously.

"It is a mixture of my own, *canabis indica*, opium and a little Turkish tobacco mixed. It is even milder than opium, and the result infinitely more wonderful."

"You can't smoke it here," said Ballam, shaking his head. "Try the pipe, old man."

But the "old man"—he was really young in spite of his grey hair—was emphatic.

"It doesn't matter," he said, "I can smoke at home. I only came out of curiosity," and he rose to go.

"Don't be in a hurry," said Ballam, hastily. "See here, we've got a basement down stairs where the hemp pipes go—the smokers up here don't like the smell—I'll come down and try one with you. Bring your coffee."

The basement was empty, and, selecting a comfortable divan, Mr. Ballam and his guest sat down.

"You can light this with a match; you don't want a spirit stove," said the stranger.

Ballam, sipping his coffee, looked dubiously at the pipe which Gonsalez offered.

"There was a question I was going to ask you," said Leon. "Does running a show like this keep you awake at nights?"

"Don't be silly," said Mr. Ballam, lighting his pipe slowly and puffing with evident enjoyment. "This isn't bad stuff at all. Keep me awake at nights? Why should it?"

"Well," answered Leon. "Lots of people go queer here, don't they? I mean it ruins people, smoking this kind of stuff."

"That's their look-out," said Mr. Ballam, comfortably. "They get a lot of fun. There's only one life, and you've got to die once."

"Some men die twice," said Leon, soberly. "Some men who, under the influence of a noxious drug, go fantee and wake to find themselves murderers. There's a drug in the East which the natives call *bal*. It turns men into raving lunatics."

"Well, that doesn't interest me," said Ballam, impatiently. "We must hurry up with this smoke. I've a lady coming to see me. Must keep an appointment, old man," he laughed.

"On the contrary, the introduction of this drug into a pipe interests you very much," said Leon, "and in spite of Miss Maggiore's appointment——"

The other started.

"What the deuce are you talking about?" he asked, crossly.

"In spite of that appointment I must break the news to you that the drug which turns men into senseless beasts is more potent than any you serve in this den."

"What's it to do with me?" snarled Ballam.

"It interests you a great deal," said Leon, coolly, "because you are at this moment smoking a double dose!"

WITH a howl of rage Ballam sprang to his feet, and what happened after that he could not remember. Only something seemed to split in his head, and a blinding light flashed before his eyes, and then a whole century of time went past, a thousand years of moving time and an eternity of flashing lights, of thunderous noises, of whispering voices, of ceaseless troubled movement. Sometimes he knew he was talking, and listened eagerly to hear what he himself had to say. Sometimes people spoke to him and mocked him, and he had a consciousness that he was being chased by somebody.

How long this went on he could not judge. In his half-bemused condition he tried to reckon time, but found he had no standard of measurement. It seemed years after that he opened his eyes with a groan, and put his hand to his aching head. He was lying in bed. It was a hard bed, and the pillow was even harder. He stared up at the white-washed ceiling and looked round at the plain, distempered walls. Then he peered over the side of the bed and saw that the floor was of concrete. Two lights were burning, one above a table and one in a corner of the room, where a man was sitting reading a newspaper. He was a curious-looking man, and Ballam blinked at him.

"I am dreaming," he said aloud, and the man looked up.

"Hallo! Do you want to get up?"

Ballam did not reply. He was still staring, his mouth agape. The man was in uniform, in a dark, tight-fitting uniform. He wore a cap on his head and a badge. Round his waist was a shiny black belt, and then Ballam read the letters on the shoulder-strap of the tunic.

"A. W.," he repeated, dazed. "A. W."

What did "A. W." stand for? And then the truth flashed on him.

Assistant Warder! He glared round the room. There was one window, heavily barred and covered with thick glass. On the wall was pasted a sheet of printed paper. He staggered out of bed and read; still open-mouthed:—

"REGULATIONS FOR HIS MAJESTY'S PRISONS."

He looked down at himself. He had evidently gone to bed with his breeches and stockings on, and his breeches were of coarse yellow material and branded with faded black arrows. He was in prison! How long had he been there?

"Are you going to behave to-day?" asked the warder, curtly. "We don't want any more of those scenes you gave us yesterday!"

"How long have I been here?" croaked Ballam.

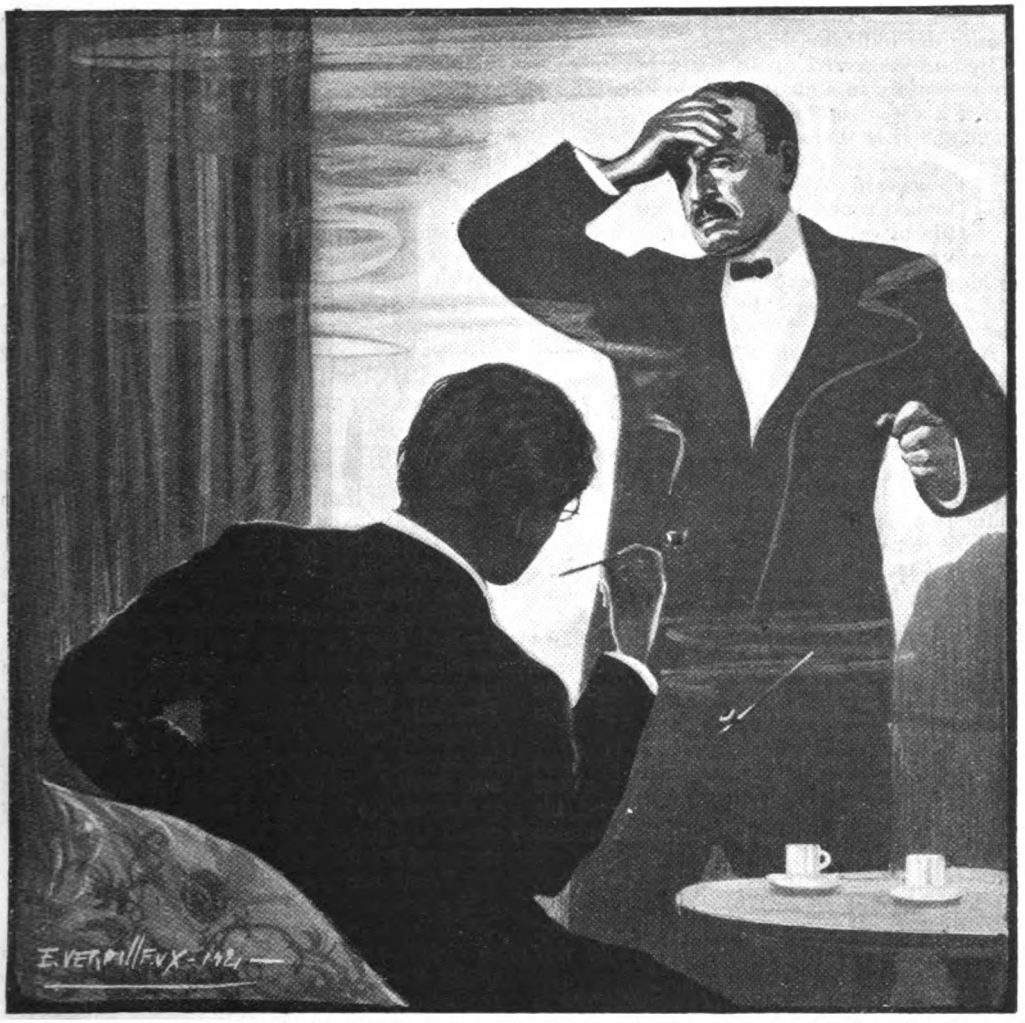
"You know how long you've been here. You've been here three weeks yesterday."

"Three weeks!" gasped Ballam. "What is the charge?"

"Now, don't come that game with me, Ballam," said the warder, not unkindly. "You know I'm not allowed to have conversations with you. Go back and sleep. Sometimes I think you are as mad as you profess to be."

"Have I been—bad?" asked Ballam.

"Bad?" The warder jerked up his head. "I wasn't in the court with you, but



"With a howl of rage Ballam sprang to his feet, and what happened after that he could not remember."

they say you behaved in the dock like a man demented, and when the judge was passing sentence of death——"

"My God!" shrieked Ballam, and fell back on the bed, white and haggard. "Sentenced to death!" He could hardly form the words. "What have I done?"

"You killed a young lady, you know that," said the warder. "I'm surprised at you, trying to come it over me after the good friend I've been to you, Ballam. Why don't you buck up and take your punishment like a man?"

There was a calendar above the place where the warder had been sitting.

"Twelfth of April," read Ballam, and could have shrieked again, for it was the first day of March when he met that mysterious stranger. He remembered it all now. *Bal!* The drug that drove men mad.

He sprang to his feet.

"I want to see the Governor! I want to tell them the truth! I've been drugged!"

"Now you've told us all that story before," said the warder, with an air of resignation. "When you killed the young lady——"

"What young lady?" shrieked Ballam. "Not Maggiore! Don't tell me——"

"You know you killed her right enough," said the warder. "What's the good of making all this fuss? Now go back to bed, Ballam. You can't do any good by kicking up a shindy this night of all nights in the world."

"I want to see the Governor! Can I write to him?"

"You can write to him if you like," and the warder indicated the table.

Ballam staggered up to the table and sat down shakily in a chair. There were half-a-dozen sheets of blue notepaper headed in black: "H.M. Prison, Wandsworth, S.W."

HE was in Wandsworth Prison! He looked round the cell. It did not look like a cell, and yet it did. It was so horribly bare, and the door was heavy-looking. He had never been in a cell before, and of course it was different to what he had expected.

A thought struck him.

"When—when am I to be punished?" he said, chokingly.

"To-morrow."

The word fell like a sentence of doom and the man fell forward, his head upon his arms, and wept hysterically. Then of a sudden he began to write with feverish haste, his face red with weeping.

His letter was incoherent. It was about a man who had come to the club and had given him a drug, and then he had spent a whole eternity in darkness, seeing lights and being chased by people and hearing whispering voices. And he was not guilty. He loved Genee Maggiore. He would not have hurt a hair of her head.

He stopped here to weep again. Perhaps he was dreaming? Perhaps he was under the influence of this drug. He dashed his knuckles against the wall, and the shock made him wince.

"Here, none of that!" said the warder, sternly. "You get back to bed."

Ballam looked at his bleeding knuckles. It was true! It was no dream! It was true, true!

He lay on the bed and lost consciousness again, and when he awoke the warder was still sitting in his place reading. He seemed to doze again for an hour, although in reality it was only for a few minutes, and every time he woke something within him said: "This morning you die!"

Once he sprang shrieking from the bed and had to be thrown back.

"If you give me any more trouble I'll get another officer in and we'll tie you down. Why don't you take it like a man? It's no worse for you than it was for her," said the warder, savagely.

After that he lay still, and he was falling into what seemed a longer sleep when the warder touched him. When he awoke he found his own clothes laid neatly by the side of the bed upon a chair, and he dressed himself hurriedly.

He looked round for something.

"Where's the collar?" he asked, trembling.

"You don't need a collar." The warder's voice had a certain quality of sardonic humour.

Ballam swooned back on the bed.

"Pull yourself together!" said the man, roughly. "Other people have gone through this. From what I've heard you ran an opium den. A good many of your clients gave us a visit. They had to go through with it, and so must you."

Ballam waited, sitting on the edge of the bed, his face in his hands, and then the door opened and a man came in. He was a slight man with a red beard and a mop of red hair.

The warder swung the prisoner round.

"Put your hands behind you," he said, and Ballam sweated as he felt the strap grip his wrists.

Then the light was extinguished. A cap was drawn over his face and he thought he heard voices behind him. He wasn't fit to die, he knew that. There always was a parson in a case like this. Someone grasped his arm on either side and he walked slowly forward through the door, across a yard, and through another door. It was a long way, and once his knees gave under him, but he stood erect. Presently they stopped.

"Stand where you are," said a voice, and he found a noose slipped round his neck, and waited, waited in agony, minutes, hours it seemed. He took no account of time and could not judge it. Then he heard a heavy step and somebody caught him by the arm.

"What are you doing here, governor?" said a voice.

The cap was pulled from his head. He was in the street. It was night, and he stood under the light of a street-lamp. The man regarding him curiously was a policeman.

"Got a bit of rope round your neck, too. Somebody tied your hands. What is it—a hold-up case?" said the policeman, as he loosened the straps, "or is it a lark? I'm surprised at you, an old gentleman like you, with white hair!"

Gregory Ballam's hair had been black less than seven hours before, when Leon Gonsalez had drugged his coffee and had brought him through the basement exit into the big yard at the back of the club.

For here was a nice new garage, as Leon had discovered when he prospected the place, and here they were left uninterrupted to play the comedy of the condemned cell, with blue sheets of prison note-paper, put there for the occasion, and a copy of Prison Regulations, which was donated quite unwittingly by Mr. Fare, Commissioner of Police.

Next Month: "The Man Who Hated Amelia Jones."

The MAN WITH NO SENSE OF HUMOUR

by

MRS. BAILLIE REYNOLDS

ILLUSTRATED BY J. DEWAR MILLS

SIR ALGERNON TYRRELL was gliding rapidly in his two-seater along neatly-hedged country roads, on his way to help shoot the partridges of his friend, Colonel Hillyer.

Although he loved sport and the day was fine; although the Hillyer preserves are among the best, even in Norfolk; in spite of his own robust health and freedom from financial anxiety, his brow was nevertheless knit, and his expression as he whizzed along was uneasy and resentful. Like most of us, he had his troubles; conspicuously the fact of having been born sole child and heir of a father who made a fortune in malt, and owed his baronetcy to having been thrice Mayor of Nordigate.

It may be conceded that he took the situation too seriously. Certainly it was annoying that his mother had doomed him to pass through life under the brand of Algernon, no second name offering him any loophole of escape. He felt that a man who had to stand up to this was already sufficiently handicapped. But the real trouble bit deeper. It lay in his eligibility.

From the time he was seventeen (when he had a narrow escape from the family of a country parson with seven daughters) he had set himself to avoid the gins, traps, pitfalls, and snares of designing flappers, manœuvring mothers, and resolute young women who thought the old plan of leaving it to the man to propose obsolete, and said so. He tried London, he tried the country. At the age of twenty-one he tried the war, and found it worse than either. He tried shutting himself up on his own estates, he tried going round the world. Nothing made any difference. He never outran the untiring huntresses.

It is perhaps not altogether to be wondered at if his view of life and women had grown completely distorted. By the time he was approaching thirty he believed that any woman who entered into conversation with him did so with the object of marrying him if she could; a notion which made him a trifle ridiculous.

Jack Hillyer, the man of whom he saw the most, had an unmarried sister. She had just become engaged to a Captain Harding, much to the relief of the preposterous Algernon, who was persuaded that this had happened only when she was quite certain that he was not to be had.

It was delightful to think of being able to go as often as he liked to Hillyers Down without awakening false hopes; in fact he felt so reassured that about a fortnight previously he had motored himself over to tea in order that he might offer his congratulations.

How was he to know that there would be another girl there—a stranger—quite unlike in type to the bonny, downright Janet? A girl with long, subtle, heavily-fringed eyes, and something in her shape and movements, also in her fanciful attire, which was quite unlike anything he had yet met in the way of a siren; and which, in fact, seemed to him almost improper.

She was staying with the Hillyers, being related to Janet's future family; and was introduced to him as Miss Bellarmine.

The drawing-room was full of people, several other unmarried men being present. Why, then, must Miss Bellarmine needs carry her cup of tea and cigarette over to where he stood and enter into conversation with him? Just as though he had offered her the glad eye! He felt himself constrained to be so curt and unresponsive as to seem rude.

She had not lingered long at his side. In a very few minutes she seemed to divine that, as he put it to himself, there was "nothing doing." She soon floated away to join the laughter and banter of a group at the window, and he was left to himself triumphantly.

What was so annoying about it was that he had not felt pleased when she went away, and that he had been unable to get her out of his mind.

He had encountered her a good many times since, for in these days one can't escape the women, go where one may; and each time he knew that secretly he wanted to talk to her again, only somehow she always eluded him.

Moreover, there was a consideration which would force itself upon him of late, and which needed careful weighing, the thought that he was nearing thirty and ought to be settling down. He caught himself in the very act of reflecting that, since the long hunt must inevitably terminate in his capture sooner or later, he would rather be captured by Miss Bellarmine than by anything feminine which had, so far, angled for him.

SHE was fairly certain to be present at to-day's shoot. Jack's father, Colonel Hillyer, had built a charming little lodge among his beech-woods—a place with windows and doors, soundly floored, well stocked with crockery and cutlery, so that one could always count upon a real good lunch, with one's legs under a solid mahogany table.

. . . M'yes. But think of being constrained to sit, in these romantic surroundings, side by side with a siren who could charm the very birds off the boughs? The outlook was actually perilous. No wonder Sir Algernon's brows were knit.

Such were the thoughts occupying his mind as he rounded a corner a bit too swiftly, and had to jam his break on hard to avoid collision with a cycle and side-car, drawn right across the lane.

In this side-car sat the lady who so intrusively filled the baronet's thoughts. She looked a trifle disturbed, and on the ground crouched Jack Hillyer, with an array of tools spread out upon an oily rag in the dust, and his good-humoured countenance disfigured by certain smears transferred thence from his grimy paws.

"Tyrrell, by Jove!" he cried, rising to his feet with a bound. "You've come in the nick of time." He approached the cornered Algernon. 'I'll just transfer Miss Bellarmine from my car to yours. She's a bit shaken up—a brute of a motor-cyclist barged right into us, and up to now I haven't made out what the damage is exactly. So I don't know how long it will be before I can start the kettle again, and even when I can, I doubt if she'd trust herself to it.'

He was taking consent wholly for granted, and began to unbutton the apron and hand out the lady, while Tyrrell was saying, in anything but cordial tones:—

"Delighted, of course, and all that, but hadn't I better wait and help you? Miss Bellarmine won't be comfortable in this little concern—it's a racer, you know, Hillyer——"

"Yes, yes, I know, not really comfy, but all right for half an hour. Any port in a storm—you'll put up with it—and with him—won't you?" he demanded of the lady, with a grin, 'that is, if he's on his best behaviour."

The passenger seemed fully to share his conviction that there could be no doubt of Sir Algernon's willingness to convey her. She got into the car without further parley, and sat down beside him as coolly as if he had been her maiden aunt.

"Now, then," said Jack, fastening the apron, "give Algie his orders. Where was it you had to go for mother?"

Miss Bellarmine turned to her new chauffeur, and said: 'Do you know Holt End Farm?"

She spoke without a smile, and almost as though the county eligible were hired to drive her; and her indifference gave him a shock.

"Yes," he replied, without looking at her, "I know it. Why?"

"I have to stop there, please, to pick up a basket of butter and things for Mrs. Hillyer."

"But it's—it's out of our way—considerably—seven miles, I should think——"

She looked up at him in a kind of vague bewilderment. "Are you short of petrol?" she asked, in surprised disapproval.

"Give you a fill-up if you are," said Jack, cheerfully, preparing to unscrew his can.

"Stop it, man; I've heaps of petrol—but this will make me late at the Lodge."

"Well, then, stand not upon the order of your going, but go at once," retorted Jack, standing back with a wave of his black hand. Nothing was left to Tyrrell but to commend his soul to the saints who guard celibacy, and start up his engine.

His whole being was in arms—the more so because of that inward weakening of which he was so alarmingly conscious. He determined that he would offer no amenities—he would do nothing himself to bring down the toppling ruin which for the first time he felt as a contingency to be seriously reckoned with.

ACCORDINGLY, they ran a couple of miles without a word spoken, and with, on her side, apparently no desire to break the silence. This he imagined to be a new plan of campaign. There was something in the nature of a thrill about that silence; something he must break into and disperse. He, therefore, turned to her with a by no means agreeable expression, and inquired—"Nervous?"

"Nervous? Oh, no," said the lady, coolly. "You are not as bad as that. Except that you change gear too abruptly, I should not call you such a bad driver."

The man was so astonished he could hardly speak. Not thus had he been previously wooed! He actually felt himself change colour as he remarked, sardonically:—

"Great judge of car-driving—what?"

"I don't say that; but I have had considerable experience. I drove General Braidwood during the war."

Worse and worse! "Perhaps"—with deadly sarcasm—"you and I had better change places."

"No, thanks. You know where we are going—I don't. Besides, I don't care to drive these belt-running concerns—Oh, I beg your pardon, I don't suppose this thing does run with a belt, does it?"

In his fury he could hardly bring out the crushing retort: "This happens to be a Crane-Hylton racer."

"Oh, is it? I have always wanted to try one. I was told they were wonderfully comfortable for the size. I don't think I agree. It may be the bad roads——"

"Or the bad driving."

"Perhaps. You take your corners too fast, don't you? The evil result of running about constantly in a district where there's very little traffic."

"How fortunate I have you on board! You can give me a lesson as we go."

She uttered a soft little chuckle. "Men often want a lesson, but very seldom take it—from a girl," she remarked.

That stung him to what the servants call "back-answer."

"I find most girls very ready to offer me all kinds of assistance."

"Do you really? Men very scarce hereabouts, I suppose?"

"I fear they are. Like the birds last season, scarce and shy."

"Oh, dear, what a depressing outlook for me! At least, your tone implies that I shall have poor sport!"

"Please don't attribute any such social enormity to me."

She smiled. "That's not so bad. I didn't expect it of you."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, it almost sounded as if, somewhere about you, carefully concealed, you kept a sense of humour; and I have repeatedly been assured that you have none."

He was enraged, as everyone always is by this particular taunt. "Indeed? May I ask who told you that?"

"Who? I can't say. Everybody. A unanimous consensus of opinion. Besides, I could see for myself——"

"I like that! We haven't exchanged much repartee up to now."

"Oh, but the first time we met I could hardly help noticing how everybody cold-shouldered you. I felt so sorry for you that I made a noble relief expedition, all on my own, and, by the way you received it, I knew the sad legend to be the still sadder truth."

"Your penetration is indeed alarming," he said, bitterly, "and it will be interesting to pursue the subject, but here we are at the Farm. Shall I go up and ask for the basket, or will you?"

"Oh, please, I think I will. I'm a little afraid to be left alone with a Crane-Hylton racer. It might bite."

"With you, it would be likely to come off second in that line."

As she ran up the avenue, she burst into hearty laughter. "Oh, I do believe you've been maligned," she cried.

She was still laughing as she returned, after what seemed to him a long interval, walking down the crunchy gravel cart-road from the farmhouse with that wonderful swing and lilting motion which seemed to him unique. The fresh breeze had warmed her cheeks to rose, her eyes glittered under their heavy lashes. She was a sight to make a man's heart beat; and under all his nonsense Tyrrell was a man, right enough.

She was soon tucked in again, and they sped on. Tyrrell found himself displaying his choicest driving, his subtlest curves. Presently her voice roused him.

"I suppose your wife doesn't care for motoring?"

"My wife! Good Lord, I'm not married!"

"Oh, sorry, sorry! But marriage isn't a crime——"

"But surely you know who I am?"

"Don't tell me I've dropped a brick! Are you somebody special? Our member of Parliament, for example? I only know you're the man with no sense of humour! I never hear names when I'm introduced."

"My name's Tyrrell, and I own a place called Thurning Towers." He could not keep the pomp out of his voice. It had less than no effect.

"Oh, what a mercy! Not a name I ought to have known. Is—is it a nice place, yours?"

"Not half bad. One of these show places, you know. Belonged to the Tudors, or the Nevilles, or somebody."

"And what are you doing there?"

"My father bought it. I say—it's really worth seeing. You'll have to come over with the Hillyers, and have lunch, and look at the oak carving and stuff."

"Oh, thanks, awfully, but I'm afraid it would be wasted on me. I'm not a connoisseur. Besides, I'm only here for a few days, and I believe they are all filled. Good of you, all the same. Oh—there is Mr. Hillyer! Have we arrived already?"

"He rounded a corner a bit too swiftly, and had to jam his brake on hard

It seemed that they had; and Tyrrell knew he was not pleased that the drive was at an end, though the conversation had, to put it mildly, not been brilliant. Next moment Miss Bellarmine was surrounded by an animated group, all laughing and talking at once. For the first time it dawned upon Tyrrell that he was so completely outside the ring that most of the allusions were incomprehensible to him. Jack was there, he having, so he said, discovered what was wrong with the old bus almost the moment after his lady had deserted him.

From that moment the disturbed and flustered owner of the Crane-Hylton was nowhere. Una Bellarmine forgot, as it seemed, his very

to avoid collision with a cycle and side-car, drawn right across the lane."

existence, in the silly jests and empty chatter of that wild crew who had so successfully cooked his goose by pointing him out to her by the damning label of the man with no sense of humour.

At lunch they were separated by the whole length of the table; and after lunch she seemed to vanish from the scene.

In consequence of his unusual state of mind, he had a disappointing day's sport. When they all reassembled for a late tea, he was in anything but a good humour; and still the lady of whom he thought did not appear.

Presently the cry was raised—"Where's Una Bellarmine?"

There was some laughter at this, and the reply—"Where do you suppose? Somewhere with Fosslake."

There seemed to be a comprehending smile on many faces. "That's a case, isn't it?" asked Janet of Captain Harding.

"Fosslake? Oh, yes. I don't think it's a secret," replied her *fiancé*. "He has wanted to marry her for two years, but she doesn't seem able to make up her mind."

"She's so sought after, I imagine that makes her hard to please," remarked an elderly lady, "but I should have thought a Viscount might satisfy her."

"And Fosslake's quite a good sort, into the bargain," said Harding.

VERY shortly after the truants reappeared, sauntering along the woodland alley. Lord Fosslake was evidently much absorbed in his companion, but his demeanour was not that of a newly-successful lover; and the hungry-hearted Tyrrell, scanning her narrowly, thought she seemed to be listening to him willingly enough, but not with much enthusiasm.

Was it a settled thing? Had she at last listened to the pleading of the man who for two years had wished to marry her? He was inclined to think that the die was not yet cast. But, whatever she thought about his lordship, there was no doubt as to her complete indifference to himself.

Tyrrell's whole manhood surged up imperious. He was not going to be ignored. He bided his time, and managed to be at her elbow when the move for departure began to be made. Then he cornered her.

"Feel inclined to trust yourself again in the racer?" he asked. "That thing of Jack's is precious shaky."

For a moment she looked at him as one who recalls a chance acquaintance with difficulty. Then she smiled very kindly.

"Why, this is coals of fire! And not only did I bore you stiff, but I took you seven miles out of your way."

"My way is yours," said Tyrrell, bluntly.

"If you put it like that, I won't refuse," she answered, after a moment's surprised hesitation. He could have sworn that she coloured slightly.

A few minutes later he found himself beside her once more, rushing through the lovely sunset landscape.

"Why shouldn't we just go round by my place?" said he presently, speaking, in his earnestness, in his natural voice, which was remarkably pleasant. "It wouldn't take very long, and you say you will have no other chance to see it. I would like to show it to you."

She raised her eyes to his and he encountered a look he could not translate—a look of pity or hesitation. Then she said: "Yes, if you like—on such an evening it will be looking its best."

"Good," said he, in much satisfaction.

Soon they turned in at the lodge gates of Thurning, and the fine grey outline of the old Tudor manor, with its gables and dripstones and oriel windows, arose before them, the panes of the windows lit like torches by the reflected sunset. He could see that Miss Bellarmine was impressed.

They stopped before the open door, and one of his numerous staff came down the steps.

"You're coming in for a few moments, just to see the hall and gallery?" he asked, quite humbly.

She assented, rather to his surprise, and greatly to his exultation. Side by side they entered, and wandered through the show parts of the fine old place.

"There are things here which I could wish to have altered," said Sir Algernon, "but as my father did it all—with the money he earned by his own hard work—I am loth to disturb anything."

"That's right—that's fine," said she, impulsively.

They drifted out presently into the terraced garden, to see how fine a view one had of the south front from the rosary. The woods behind them were full of the cooing of doves, and as they sat down upon a stone bench there was a magical quality in the sunset, as though the very air were permeated with molten gold.

"I wonder if it's true," said Tyrrell, "that the greatest things people do, they do unconsciously—without intending to do them, but simply because, they being what they are, it comes natural?"

"I—I don't think I quite understand."

"I feel I have got to tell you what you have done to-day without in the least intending it. You have saved a man, body and soul, from the quicksand of fatuous idiocy into which he was comfortably sinking."

She drew in her breath sharply, making as if to rise. "Oh—don't!" she cried, and of course he persisted the more, detaining her resolutely where she was.

"I must make you understand. I'm a selfish, aimless hound. I go about thinking myself no end of a fine fellow. I'm so big in my own eyes that I can't see anybody else. You have changed all that. In a few minutes—almost in one minute—you have put me in my place. I have seen myself for once in other eyes—your eyes—and I'm jolly well ashamed of myself."

She rose from her seat, breathing quickly, evidently moved. He rose, too, and walked beside her step by step along the pleached walk.

"And—and you think—you believe that I have done this without intending to do it?"

"I know you have. You didn't even know who I was, and were not at all impressed when I told you. You are as much above and beyond—all that—as I am beneath you. I'm like a whipped dog, I want to kiss the hand that has chastised me. I have never known what love of woman means—but now I love you, for you have re-created me."

Una Bellarmine had grown very pale. Her eyes were liquid with unshed tears. She wrung her hands together and compressed her lips as if to hold back what she felt by main force.

"Really, Sir Algernon"—her voice was strained and artificial. "What am I to say to you? Are you—proposing to me, upon so—very—slight an acquaintance?"

"I am," he answered at once, "though not so much proposing as confessing. I have not, naturally, the least hope that you would say 'Yes'—as yet. I only want you to know that from this day on I am going to be as unlike what I have been as I can possibly compass."

The tears that swam in her eyes ran over and lay maddeningly on her cheeks, just where the camellia white merged into faint rose. "Oh," said she, "this is dreadful. What have I done?"

"I have just told you that. Turned a dummy into a live man."

"Oh, I have, I have!" she burst out, and snatching a handkerchief, she held it to her quivering mouth. "I am the hatefullest cat in all the world—for I did not, as you suppose, do it unintentionally. I set out to do it! You must hear it, I owe it to you that you should know—I—*did it for a bet!*"

Tyrrell staggered mentally. He even winced physically, as if she had hit him.

"A bet?" he said, hoarsely. "With whom, if I may venture to ask, was the bet made?"

"With—Jack Hillyer."

"A bet that you would—what? Make me propose to you?"

She assented only by a movement of her abased head. There was a most uncomfortable silence.

"So," he said, "I have been even more a laughing-stock than I supposed."

She stammered for words. "It's—it's all turned out so different from anything that seemed possible. I—I felt that, in undertaking it, I was to avenge the wrongs of my sex. And—and your preposterous ill manners that first time we met, when I took pity on your loneliness—it made me feel that you deserved the worst. Jack contrived the situation this morning. There was nothing wrong with the side-car. We need not have fetched the butter. I—I knew perfectly well all the time who you were. I was just playing with you—deliberately leading you on."

THEY had come to a standstill by a circular lily-pond, set in the crazy stone pavement. In its placid mirror they saw themselves reflected—a big man, grey of face, with writhing lips; a girl holding her handkerchief to her mouth, unable to complete her sentence for the sobs which choked her voice.

It seemed to them both as if a long, long time passed by before he said:—

"I suppose you are going to marry Fosslake?"

Before she could reply, they both saw that the butler was leading two visitors out of the garden doors upon the terrace, and preparing to usher them across the lawn.

"Jack—and Janet. They must have come to fetch me," she faltered, unsteadily.

The victim of Jack Hillyer's joke gazed at the new arrivals. Una and he stood close behind a big clump of pampas grass, and though they could see between its fronds, they themselves were hidden from view.

"Jack's nervous about his money, evidently," commented the baronet, with a composure which took himself by surprise. "Was it a very expensive bet?"

"Trample on me—it's your right," she grieved. "Would it comfort you at all if I were to walk across the lawn barefoot, wrapped in a sheet and carrying a lighted candle?"

She found she could not meet his scornful eye. "That would indeed complete it characteristically. It needed just that suggestion to fill my dose of physic to the brim. So entirely ridiculous have you found me that you don't trouble to conceal from me that even your expressions of regret were not serious."

"Oh—*don't!* Oh, you're savage!"

"Didn't you know that? There's a beast

in most men, I believe, who will bite if tortured," he flung at her, as he moved determinedly out of cover and advanced to signal to the two who were gazing aimlessly about, and apparently finding the absence of the couple very amusing.

"Condolences, Hillyer," he said, clearly, as soon as they were within earshot. "Miss Bellarmine has won her bet. I hope the paying of it won't break you."

Jack's honest face grew fiery red. He had never heard that tone in the baronet's voice before, and it made him feel extremely uncomfortable. "What on earth are you talking about?" he demanded in hot confusion.

"About your bet." The cool, contemptuous voice stung and bit. "Miss Bellarmine has won. Indeed, I gave her very little trouble. It was practically a walk-over. She had only to beckon and I responded."

"I don't know what you mean, Tyrrell—are you balmy?" cried Jack, desperately. "What should make you think there was a bet about you?"

Una had had time to compose herself. She stepped into the breach, white, but resolute. "Jack—I told him! I simply had to! He—he isn't a bit like what you led me to suppose—and I've hurt him dreadfully. Oh, what induced me to be such a toad?"

"What induced you to be such a little duffer as to let it out?" cried Jack, in very natural disgust. "That's the worst of girls—they can be trusted to give away the show, every time."

"I wonder if you realize exactly what you have done, Hillyer?" asked Tyrrell, steadily. "Have you considered, for example, that I can hardly continue to live in the neighbourhood after this? I'm the man with no sense of humour—the man they made a bet about—the man who thought himself so good at eluding girls, and succumbed instantly to the very first one that meant business! I must sell Thurning Towers, and go off to some other place where I'm not known. Even then my reputation is pretty sure to follow me. You've made a kind of Wandering Jew of me. No doubt it's been a screaming joke. But I'm down and out."

"Tyrrell, don't be a goat!" pleaded Jack, horribly nervous. "Nobody in the wide world need ever know what's happened—why should they? Janet knows, and Una and I—but——"

"Do you seriously assure me that no one else shares your knowledge?" Tyrrell glanced at Janet, who flushed warmly. "I thought so! Harding is in the precious secret, and Harding has handed on the rich jest to a few chosen friends—in short, everybody who was at the shoot to-day is in the know."

There was a most unpleasant silence. Una flashed a glance at the face of the man she had hit so unintentionally hard. It was strained and set, but it was not ignoble. She found it, in fact, very nearly heroic.

"Well," she said, defiantly, "and pray what do they know?"

That challenge drew his eyes to her, and he replied at once. "They know now that you undertook my humiliation for a bet; and to-morrow they will know that you accomplished it."

Una cleared her throat. "Then they will know more than I do," said she, distinctly.

"What do you mean by that?"

"I don't remember refusing you," she murmured very low, gazing down at the grass, and poking a daisy with the tip of her shoe. "You see I—as a matter of fact I make it a rule—never to refuse two people on the same afternoon. And it happened that I refused Lord Fosslake after lunch."

For quite a perceptible space of time nobody moved, and nobody spoke. Then Jack pulled out his watch with a jerk.

"Jove! How late it is! And I promised the Governor that I'd roll the tennis-lawn before dinner! Come on, Janet—I expect Tyrrell will bring Una home, when they've had it out."

He turned on his heel and bolted, closely pursued by his sister, back across the lawn, faster than they had come. It looked as though they were fleeing from an insupportable situation.

WHEN they were gone Tyrrell did not immediately break his overwhelmed silence. When he did, he spoke in even, chilly tones.

"What am I expected to do now?" The tone told her that the question was the result not of stupidity but of deliberate intention.

"Isn't it obvious?" with a last despairing attempt at lightness—"I am offering you your revenge."

"And suppose"—menacingly—"suppose I take it?"

"Do you mean—suppose you take—*me?*"

He lost his calm a moment and repeated, like a man dazed, "Suppose I take *you?*"

"Well, it's up to you now. You must either accept me or—or reject me! Which are you going to do? Ah!"—as he made a motion of repudiating both alternatives, "can't you see I'm in earnest now? You've pushed me to it! You're so sincere, I can't be insincere! Oh, I like you! I admire you! You have taken this insult standing! I'm not at all sure that I couldn't even—love you—with a little persuasion!"

"But I'm not a persuasive person. I'm

"'What induced you to be such a little duffer as to let it out?' cried Jack. 'That's the worst of girls—they can be trusted to give away the show, every time.'"

better at bullying, I believe," he said, sternly, "and I shall try that if you go on playing with me much longer."

She raised her usually half-closed eyes. They were afire with mischief, and dark with something deeper. "I shall probably play with you more than you like—at least at first! However, with practice, you may grow more playful—that is, I hope so; but this afternoon I deserve to be punished, so you have leave to bully me, if you like. If you don't like—I can go——"

The sentence was not destined to be finished. "I'll take you at your word," he cried, as he imprisoned her, and incredulously found her yielding and thrilling in his arms. "Your punishment will be more lingering if I keep you than if I let you go."

"It looks remarkably like a life-sentence for both of us," she sighed.

"COCKTAIL, SAR?"

by

H. de VERE STACPOOLE

ILLUSTRATED BY E.G.OAKDALE

I.

THERE are situations that may be best described as mixed. Patrick Michael O'Sheamus Cassidy was a professional gambler, a man of mark in two hemispheres, and a man absolutely to be trusted. Like the great Sheedy, his word was as good as his bond; like the late lamented Mr. John Oakhurst, he had a heart as well as a purse; but he had no soft spots in his character. He knew men and he knew women, and he knew little good of them. He had absolutely no mercy for fools and knaves and the weak of knee, but for an honest fellow-mortal in distress Cassidy was a sure stand-by, and Truth was, for him, Religion.

Cassidy's knowledge of art was almost equal to his knowledge of men. He was always travelling and picking up treasures, storing them to be used some day when the spirit moved him to drop the cards and dice and settle down. He was fond of music. He was fond of so many simple things that his character, coupled with his wealth, formed a problem. Why did he continue in a profession ranking in pious eyes only a little above the profession of a burglar?

Perhaps he knew that in private life his past would follow him. Had he been a gambler in wheat, in stocks, in land, or the lives of his fellow-mortals, all would have been well; but he had chosen to be a gambler pure and simple, and, though he had chosen a cleaner game than that which they often play in the Wheat Pit or Wall Street, convention was against him. Perhaps the game dominated him. Perhaps the study of men and of character conducted across the green board held him in its grip. Who knows?

He was forty-two at the date of this story, a fine-looking, fresh-faced man, clean-shaven, well-dressed, and with a voice that told the tale of his Irish descent, but this morning he looked scarcely thirty as he stood on the deck of the *Saigon*, coming to her berth across the blue harbour under the blaze of the Javanese sky.

Coloured houses, rocketing palms, far blue mountains, the harbour where western freighters and junks lay at anchor, he took it all in as he stood on the spar deck talking to Van Zyall, the Dutch trader, and two or three other passengers of the *Saigon*. The tepid wind blowing from the shore brought perfumes of vanilla and earth, ooze and a tang of tar from the nearing wharves. Sights, sounds, and smells absolutely unnoticed by the others who were talking of the Borneo tobacco crop, the customs, and the price of sugar.

"You stay at the Amsterdam Hotel," said Van Zyall for the twentieth time that morning. "Tell them Van Zyall sent you. Hoffman will put you straight."

"I'll remember," said Cassidy. During the run from Malacca he had lost money to Van Zyall; the play had been trifling for him, and it amused him to think that the Dutchman was trying to make amends for his winnings by offers of good advice.

Then came along Connart. He had lost money to Connart, too. Connart was a man of dubious nationality, about as old as Cassidy, a fragile man, worn by the climate, pale, and with a brown Vandyke beard. He was well-to-do, owning a big place near the town, and he interested Cassidy a lot.

Connart hated to lose and loved to win. Most men do, but in the exhibition of his

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hatred and love, in his general manner of play, and in something recondite and illusive in the man's character and appealing only to some sixth sense, Cassidy had formed the opinion that here was a gambler of the first water.

Very few men are that.

Cassidy had also formed the opinion that Connart was an uncut jewel, that his passion had never been fully developed, either from want of opportunity or self-restraint.

Last night, in a conversation with Connart, he had discovered that lack of opportunity was the probable cause, the ingenuous Connart declaring that it was quite impossible to play high outside Monte Carlo without being swindled.

"Of course, it is different with you," said he, meaning to say that Cassidy's probity was beyond reproach.

II.

"WHERE are you putting up?" asked Connart.

"The Amsterdam Hotel," replied Cassidy. "Van Zyall says it's the best."

"He's right," replied the other. "How long did you say you were staying here?"

"A week. I'm going on by this boat and she'll be here a week."

"Well, you must come and see me," replied the other; "come to dinner or something. My place is not far out, and I'll run in and fetch you to-morrow, if you'll come. I'll run in about five and you can dine with me—will you?"

"Yes," said Cassidy. "I'll come."

The *Saigon* was close in to the wharf now, moving almost imperceptibly, with the engines rung off and the fellows waiting with the hawsers. Cassidy, collecting his luggage, did not see Connart again, and when he reached the Amsterdam Hotel had almost forgotten him.

Here, in the hot season, one does a lot of forgetting. Seated in the veranda with a whisky-and-soda at his elbow he fell into conversation with a trader who spoke English like an Englishman and who gave him the news of the place. Van Amberg was the trader's name, and his news was mostly about crop prospects, the rate of exchange on London, and the pictures showing that week at the chief cinema palace. Then Cassidy gave his news, the bad cooking on board the *Saigon*, a storm they had run into after leaving Malacca, and other trifles, including the names of some of the passengers.

Van Amberg knew some of them personally, including Connart.

"I'm going to dinner with him to-morrow night," said Cassidy.

"Oh, are you?" said Van Amberg. "Then you'll see Daia."

"Who's Daia?"

"She's his wife—well, call her his wife—Dyak girl."

"Dyak?"

"Just so. Not from Borneo. New Guinea Coast. Some sea Dyaks have settled there up a river, and that's where Connart fell in with her. He was up there prospecting for gold and nearly lost his head, for those chaps go in for head collecting still on the sly. I had the whole story from Ollsen, a man who was with him in those parts on the gold hunt. There were six of them, with a few Javanese chaps to help work the schooner they hired, and they pushed her up the river as far as she would go and then took to the bank, leaving the ship in charge of the Javanese.

"Ollsen was the man who had the location, and a three days' tramp took them to it and they found gold, but not in paying quantity. They found rubies, too, but small and not of much account. Then they fell in with the Dyaks, who were friendly at first, or seemed so, till, one night, there was a row. I don't know what about, but the Dyaks broke up the camp and killed everyone but Connart and Ollsen.

"They tied these two chaps up and put them in a hut—meaning to kill them later on most likely, but Daia had taken a fancy to Connart, and she cut them loose in the night and showed them the way down the river, back to their ship. Sounds like a yarn, doesn't it, but it's true enough. He couldn't send the girl back to her tribe—they'd have killed her. So he took her with him and brought her here. Sounds like a story out of the pictures."

Cassidy concurred. There is a touch of unreality about the Dutch East Indies, at least for a Briton. The past clings to them, and there the days seem not so far remote when the high-pooped ships of Holland held the seas, when De Ruyter and Van Tromp led the Dutch fleets, and Vanderdecken was a man, not a legend.

"What sort of fellow is Connart?" asked Cassidy.

"Oh, good enough," said the other; "a bit close and keeps to himself. It isn't often that he invites people to his place—must have taken a fancy to you."

"Does he gamble?"

"Not that I know of."

Then Van Amberg, remembering business, went off down town, leaving Cassidy to his thoughts undisturbed, except by the rustle of the tepid wind in the palm trees by the veranda.

Connart knew him by repute as well as personally. Pat Cassidy, the gambler, was even a bigger figure in the East than in the West, not only because of his reputation for

straight dealing and high play, but by the fact that he had won the Calcutta Sweep two years before.

It was the gambler, not the man, that Connart had taken a fancy to.

Sure of his money if he won, with all his latent gambling instinct magnetically aroused, Connart was anxious for play, and play on a big scale. So Cassidy fancied as he sat in the great cane arm-chair smoking and listening to the wind in the palms.

The more he thought of the matter, the more sure he was that Connart was no "sucker" anxious to win a few pounds, but a gambler worth engaging in battle.

Cassidy, in his long experience, had only met two dangerous men. Men who had fought him to the death and threatened to destroy him. Cedarquist, of the Amazon Plantation Company, and Bowater, the wheat speculator. Men in these little days play as a rule for amusement or to win a few pounds; the great gamblers of the past belong to the past. But, occasionally, one finds a throw-back.

Some instinct told Cassidy that Connart was the third dangerous man he had met, but he was not yet sure. To-morrow would tell.

III.

A LITTLE before five o'clock next day Connart's car, driven by a Chinese chauffeur, drew up at the hotel.

Cassidy was waiting in the veranda and they started, taking a road that led by banks of tree fern, palms, and grey-green cactus, under a sky losing its glare and against a wind warm and scented with the fragrance of trees and flowers.

Then fields of cane took the place of palms and ferns, and, beyond the cane-fields, groves of orange led them to the home of Connart, a wide, spaciously-built verandaed dwelling amidst gardens haunted by tropical butterflies and birds gorgeous as the flowers.

"Well," said Cassidy, as he looked around him, "you ought to be happy here."

"Oh, it's well enough," said Connart, unenthusiastically; "the only thing against it is it's not Europe."

"Faith, that's true," said the other. He was thinking more of the Dyak girl Van Amberg had spoken of than his host, but there was no sign of her. They took their seats in the veranda, and the Chinese servants brought drinks and cigars, and they talked of a hundred things, but never once did Connart hint of a wife.

At dinner it was the same; the iced champagne did not loosen Connart's tongue as to himself and his affairs, and then, after dinner, they had no need for conversation. The thing had happened. They had drifted into play, and, seated opposite one another, were barred out from all things mundane but the chances of the game.

The great moon rose and cast its light on the palms and flowers of the garden, and laid a square of white on the matting of the room where a blue haze of cigar smoke hung above the lamps; white moths entered and cast bird-like shadows on the table and walls, unheeded by the players.

Past midnight the grass curtains dividing the room from the next were pushed aside and the figure of a girl appeared.

It was Daia.

Van Amberg had forgotten to mention that she was beautiful.

The bangles on her bare arms glittered in the lamplight, her feet were bare, and the robe of gauzy, ghostly white material, half veiling the lines of her figure, added to the strangeness of the picture.

Cassidy looked up, then Connart turned.

"Daia," said Connart. Then turning to Cassidy, "This is Daia." He picked up his cards again, the girl glided up and stood behind his chair, and the game went on without another word.

The beauty of the girl and the strangeness had no effect upon Cassidy. He had wished to see her as a curiosity, nothing more. Women had no part in his life. Without being a misogynist, he was absolutely cold as far as the other sex was concerned—rather antagonistic, if anything. Women were a nuisance. Yet he was attractive to women.

Daia, standing behind Connart's chair, seemed to find him attractive now. Her eyes were fixed upon him, eyes deep and mysterious as the sea, dark as night in the forests of Borneo.

Cassidy continued his play; a stone figure standing behind Connart's chair would have moved him as little as the figure of the girl. The game held him entirely.

Then, chancing to look up, he saw the curtains swaying. She was gone.

The play continued till the clock standing on a little table close by struck two. Then he broke off play.

He had lost seven hundred pounds. He took a fountain pen from his pocket and wrote out his cheque on Matheson's Bank, and handed it to Connart.

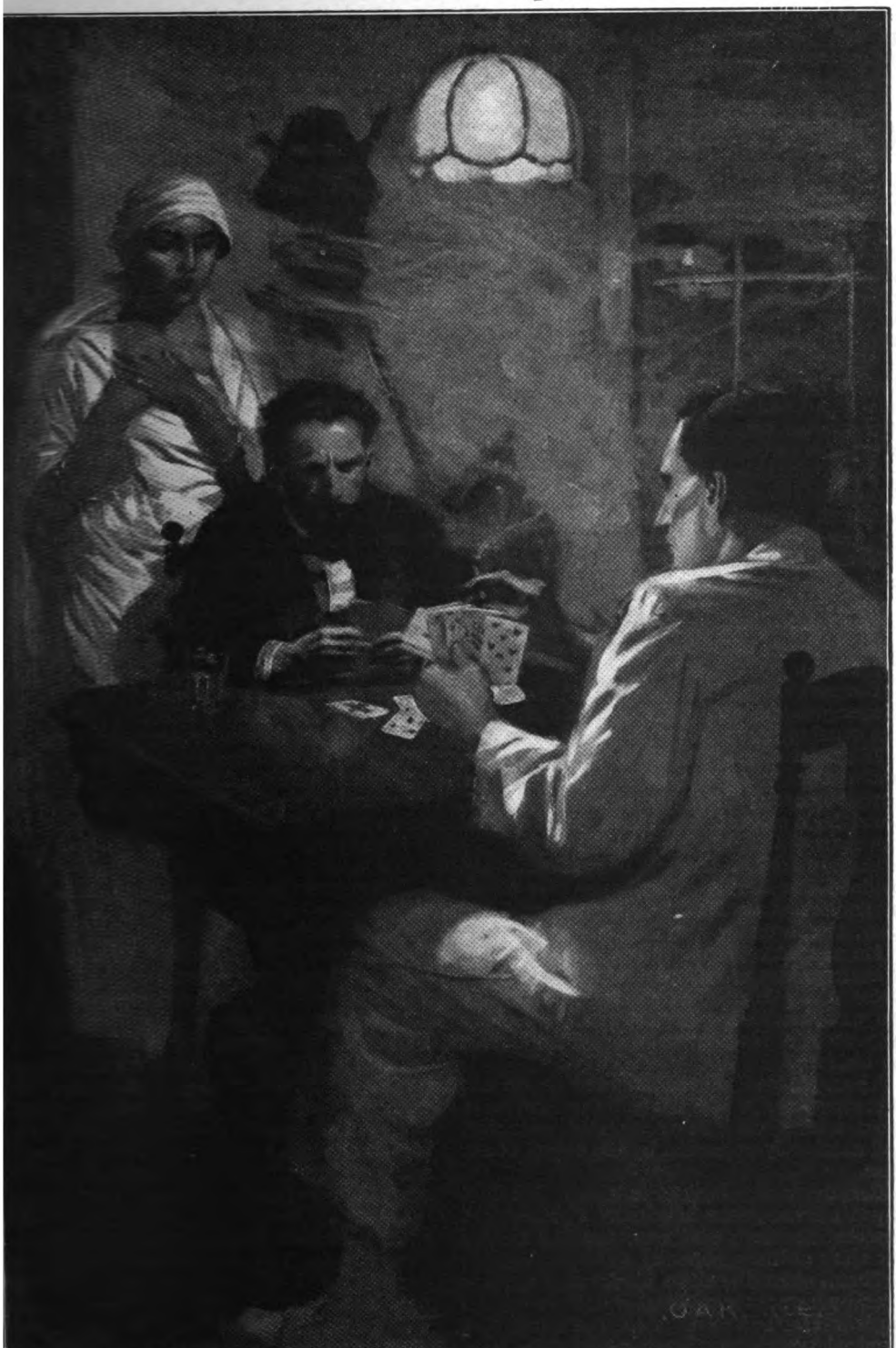
"They'll tell you my cheque is good for any amount," said Cassidy.

"That's all right," said Connart. "Have a game to-morrow night?"

"Just as you like."

"Right! — I'll send the car for you. You'll dine here?—Right." He called a servant and ordered the car to be brought round.

"It's pretty late," said Cassidy.



"Daia, standing behind Connart's chair, seemed to find Cassidy attractive. Her eyes were fixed upon him, eyes deep and mysterious as the sea."

"Oh, the hotel keeps open all night," replied the other. "We're used to late hours in this place."

IV.

ON the way back to the hotel Cassidy felt elated. He had six days before the *Saigon* started, and he reckoned on a big fight with a worthy antagonist. The stakes of to-night would be nothing to what was coming, and Connart had the money to back his elbow. He had made inquiries about him. Games where skill entered into the business did not appeal to Cassidy; pure chance was his favourite field and the bones his favourite weapon.

He played bridge, just as a golfer plays clock golf on a lawn, but he looked down on the game and the highly respectable men and women who make an income by their sharpness as bridge players.

Just before closing his eyes that night the figure of the girl Daia framed itself, for a moment, before him. Was Connart married to her? The question came with the picture. He could not tell and he did not care.

Next day at five o'clock the car arrived, and Cassidy took his departure for the plantation.

Connart received him in the veranda; dinner was dispatched, and the business of the evening began.

Midnight struck unheeded by the players, and again, as on the preceding night, the curtains parted, the figure of Daia appeared, stood for a moment, and then glided behind the chair of Connart.

Cassidy looked up and bowed. The girl inclined her head slightly, then she stood, motionless as a statue, seeming to watch the play, but in reality watching Cassidy.

He seemed to fascinate her.

Perhaps he was for her a new type of man, perhaps his absolute indifference towards her was the charm; her eyes followed every movement of his hands and every expression on his face.

Then, instead of withdrawing as on the preceding night, she sat on the arm of a great basket chair near by, still watching, and absolutely unheeded by the object of her gaze.

Cassidy was winning to-night. He had wiped off the seven hundred. Fortune had deserted Connart, and was standing behind the chair of his opponent.

Then, when the little clock on the table near by struck two, Cassidy laid down his cards. He had won two thousand five hundred pounds.

Daia had vanished.

"Let's go on," said Connart.

"Well then, till half-past," replied Cassidy.

They went on, but the luck still held, and at half-past two the play stopped, Connart three thousand pounds to the bad.

"You've struck a bad vein," said Cassidy. "It would have been better to have stopped. Oh, don't bother about a cheque. We can settle up before I go. You'll want your revenge."

"To-morrow night?" said the other.

"Right," said Cassidy, "but I'm straining your hospitality; why not come and dine with me at the hotel and play there?"

"I'd just as soon play here," replied Connart, "if it's all the same to you. It's more comfortable here, and quieter. Besides, hotel people talk."

"That's true," said Cassidy, "but what do you mind about the hotel people?" Connart, helping himself to a whisky-and-soda with a steady hand, despite his losses, did not reply for a moment. Then he said:—

"Oh, I don't know—one has to keep up a name in a place like this. I know the best people, and you'd be surprised how old-fashioned and stodgy they are. There are only two circles here, the best and the worst, and I've strained the best with Daia. I don't want to add late gambling at the Amsterdam to my sins. I never gamble—that's my reputation here."

Cassidy took a whisky-and-soda, then while the car was being brought round, and to make conversation, he asked about Daia.

"A man at the hotel was talking about you,' said Cassidy, "and he mentioned that you were married."

"I'm not."

"I see."

"No, you don't—Daia is no more to me than a daughter."

"You mean——"

"I mean exactly what I say. Did that man tell you how she came to me?"

"Yes."

"She got me free of those Dyak people, risked her life for me, and she lives with me, and, of course, not being married to me, people look on her as my mistress. She's not, she's my dog. She became violently attached to me up in that camping place, just as a child or a dog might; she led me as a dog might, and she lives with me as a dog might live with me. There is nothing at all between us but that. People don't know that; it's no use in telling them, they couldn't understand. I've never even tried to tell them. I did tell one man, a Dutchman, that there was nothing between us, that Daia was only living here as a child might live with me, and he winked at me and grinned."

"I can understand it easy enough," said

Cassidy, " but it's queer. D'you care for her ? "

" Very much, but only as I might care for a dog. She's undeveloped, or rather not quite human—still, I care for her very much. You see, she cares for me in quite an extraordinary way—as a dog. Can anything care for a man as much as a dog does ? "

" Faith, I don't know," said Cassidy. " I've never had a dog and I've never cared for a woman."

Then the car came round and he drove off for the hotel with, somehow, a better opinion of Connart than he had before.

CONNART was weak. Cassidy, like a physician, had diagnosed the great weak spot in his character. He was an Ar gambler without the special genius of a Cassidy, and without the moral or immoral courage to gamble openly. Fortune hates a man like that, who hangs on to her skirts in the dark and ignores her in the daylight, and Cassidy, the spoiled child of Fortune, could not but despise him—but he was at least leading a clean life and he had not wronged the woman who had loved him.

Next night the proceedings took place as usual, and the next—it might have been a play that was being acted over and over again with a slight difference each time, the dinner, the game, Daia gliding in and out again, the settling-up, and the departure of Cassidy.

Fortune played with the players, huge sums were lost and won, but it was not till the fifth and tragic night that the real struggle came. Cassidy was due to depart in the morning. The *Saigon* left at eight o'clock. His luggage, all but a few light things, was on board.

They had flung the cards away. The dice had taken their place, and the players sat opposite one another flushed, bright-eyed, and heedless of everything but chance. They had drunk more than enough, and long glasses of iced brandy-and-soda stood on the table at their elbows.

Daia was not present. She had looked in and vanished. The clock pointed to seven minutes to two.

Cassidy rattled the box and cast.

Then Connart pushed his chair back.

" That does me," said he.

He had lost fifteen thousand pounds.

Cassidy picked up the cubes, dropped them again, and leaned back in his chair.

" Are you cleared out ? " asked he.

" Absolutely."

" Rough luck ! " said Cassidy.

The tension removed, the drink was getting at him. He suddenly hated the business. He had never played quite like this before, calling night after night and accepting his opponent's hospitality. The victory had drawn all his teeth. He would have handed back his winnings straight across the table, but he could not do that. They had played ; if he had lost, he would have paid. The fifteen thousand was his, and Connart was not the man to accept charity.

" The plantation is tied up," said Connart, " and there's no more cash, and that's an end of it."

Cassidy, leaning back in his chair, hands in pockets, seemed to be thinking profoundly. Then he sat up. The whisky had given him an idea.

" I'll play you double or quits," said he with a hiccup.

" I told you I had nothing more," replied Connart.

" Put up Daia," said the other, with a laugh. " I'll play you for Daia or quits—go on, you fool, you're going to win."

" Daia ! " said Connart.

On the crest of disaster, a life-line seemed flung to him by Satan, though Cassidy was Satan by no means. Cassidy was just a man who wanted to get out. He had fancied Connart a very wealthy man ; he wasn't. He was broken at fifteen thousand, and all those dinners and all the hospitality he had received rose up, backed and flushed with whisky in Cassidy's mind, crying, if you will permit the stretch, " Give the chap another chance."

He did not want Daia. If he won her, she would be of no use to him. It was like saying, " I will play you for that big euphorbia tree in your garden." He could no more take Daia off with him than the tree.

But to Connart, whose mind was in a whirl, the life-line seemed cast to him by the Devil—still there was the chance !

Had he stopped to think, he might have refused. Cassidy gave him no time.

He cast, handed the box to Connart, who cast.

" You've won," said Cassidy, " We're quits."

" God ! " said Connart, with his elbows on the table and his head between his hands.

Gambling teaches one a lot of things. He had gambled with Daia as a counter and might have lost her to this man—this Devil ! and the thing he might have lost disclosed itself to him. He loved the woman who had saved him. She had saved him twice. Saved his life, saved his future.

Cassidy, well pleased, poured himself out another whisky, lit another cigar, and sat down again.

Connart neither moved nor spoke, then he rose up, went to a desk in the corner of the room, opened a drawer, and took something from it. Then he wrote for a moment.

He came to Cassidy with a slip of paper in his hand. Cassidy took it. It was a cheque for fifteen thousand.

Cassidy tore the paper in two, then in four, and cast the pieces on the ground, the whisky turning to vinegar in him.

"I'd give you to understand that I'm a gentleman," said Cassidy. "Good night. I don't want the car. I can walk."

V.

NOTHING is more unreasonable than whisky stopped in its convivial and warming work, especially when its workshop is the mind of an Irishman.

For a mile down the road Cassidy walked, absurdly raging. Then the night wind and the moonlight and the palms and the exercise began to tell on him, and he reached the outskirts of the town, calm, and almost regretful.

The Chinese night porter saluted him and he went up to his room, turned on the electrics, and began to pack the few things he carried in his light luggage.

He could not sleep, so he did not undress. It was after four in the morning and he would have to join the *Saigon* at seven, so he lit a pipe and sat down at the open window to smoke and think. The whole of this business was a new experience and gave him plenty of food for thought. It came to him now that Connart had actually gambled with the girl, whilst he, Cassidy, had only used her as a door of escape, a last chance to let Connart save himself. Did Connart actually imagine that he, Cassidy, cared for the girl and wanted her? Undoubtedly. That was why he tried to hand back the money and efface as much as possible the disgraceful deal into which he had been trapped—that was the word—by Cassidy.

Cassidy, considering this matter, laughed to himself.

He would never see Connart again, but Connart would always have that opinion of him, would look on him as a man who had taken advantage of another man's money losses to do a deal in flesh and blood.

He heard voices down below, then the voices ceased. He tapped the ashes from his pipe and was just about to re-fill it when the door of his room opened. He turned and found himself face to face with Daia.

She had evidently followed him on foot. The reason why she had followed him, any man could see, even Cassidy. It surrounded her like an aura as she stood gazing at him with those dark, unfathomable eyes.

He neither rose from his chair nor spoke.

Behind her, the yellow claw-like hand of the Chinese night porter closed the door on them.

She came gliding towards him, sank beside him and took his hands in hers; then, with head raised and her eyes still fixed on his, she began to speak. She spoke in the language of her people. He did not understand a word, but he understood everything. Understood that she had followed him, that she loved him, that she was his slave, that she would follow him to the ends of the earth, and even beyond, to the ghostly country of the Atu Jalan.

With her hands clasped in his, he was no longer thinking, or trying to think; she enveloped him.

Then, suddenly, the spell was broken.

The sound of a car drawing up outside came through the open window.

Cassidy disengaged himself, swiftly but gently, from the arms that had encircled him, he placed his finger on his lips to say "Hush," stole to the door, opened it, and glanced back. She was gazing after him, crouched still beside the chair, with one arm resting on it. She nodded to him as though to say, "I wait." He left the room and next moment he was in the hall.

The night lamp showed Connart, and through the open door beyond he could see the car standing in the dawn.

"Ah," said Connart.

"Come outside," said Cassidy. He got the other into the street.

Connart, in the grey-blue light that was breaking over the houses, looked old and shaken. Cassidy, hatless and dazed, stood for a moment, then, pointing with his thumb to the upper storey of the hotel, he said, "She's up there. In my room."

"You tore up my cheque, for money was not your game, and you pretended to be angry and refused the car, and spoke of yourself as a gentleman!" said Connart. He took off his hat and held it in his hand for a moment as though to let the land wind, which was beginning to blow, reach his head. Then he dropped the hat on the ground, and folded his arms and inclined his head slightly as if in thought.

"You are absolutely wrong," said Cassidy. "She has only come this minute."

"I know that," said Connart, "an honest man told me—the hall porter."

Cassidy swallowed the insult.

"She followed me without my knowing. I had absolutely nothing to do with it. I do not care for her."

Connart laughed.

"How could she follow you? She has been scarcely ever in this town and she did not know where you were staying."

Cassidy seemed to consider the proposition for a moment. The unfortunate man could not tell whether she had followed him by some Dyak tracking instinct, or by scent like a dog, or how. He only knew the facts

"He did not understand a word, but he understood everything—she loved him she was his slave—she would follow him to the ends of the earth."

of the case, and the hopelessness of trying to explain the position, also the absolute necessity of getting away at once lest Daia should suddenly appear.

Then he remembered that he had no hat, that he would have to go back for it. That was the last straw.

"You can think what you like of me," said he, "she's innocent. Go up and take her away. I'm off. Curse this place. I'm going aboard. I have no hat."

He picked up Connart's hat, turned, and walked off with it.

AT eight o'clock the *Saigon* put out, and Cassidy, on the deck with Connart's panama on his head, stood watching the receding wharves. Not a word had come from Connart to the ship, not a whisper through the clear air of all that fantastic business. The town, with its palm trees and houses flooded by the blaze of morning light, had about it an extraordinary air of peace and contentment, silence and detachment. What had happened at the Amsterdam Hotel? Had she gone back; what did she think of him; what was Connart thinking of him? Was Connart wearing his hat; what would the hotel people do with the few inconsiderable articles he had left behind; what would they think of him leaving like that? Then, suddenly, a great and forgotten fact wrote itself in letters of fire from the blue hills to the sea.

"You have not paid your hotel bill." A week's board and lodging, champagne, cigars, drinks to all and sundry, tips——

He left the deck and sought the bar of the *Saigon*, where a dusky gentleman was setting out bottles—above the bottles, across the Venesta panelling, the words re-grouped themselves:—

"You have not paid your hotel bill." He could liken the whole situation to nothing earthly, till——

"Cocktail, sar?" asked the dusky bartender.

Cassidy nodded.

ACROSTICS.

A NEW four-months series begins below. Twelve guineas will be awarded in prizes.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 97.

If seasons by their fruits are known,
Autumn and summer here are shown.

1. In spacious times queen good and great.
2. Luminous and of little weight.
3. When thus, a door is not a door.
4. Now think of eighteen fifty-four.
5. Sounds new, as someone was aware.
6. 'Tis thus some ladies treat their hair.
7. A Roman standard, or a bird.
8. Five-lettered palindromic word.
9. A current yarn, untrue perhaps.
10. Recurring, when twelve months elapse.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 97 must reach the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, not later than by the first post on August 9th. One alternative may be sent to each light. At the foot every solver should write his pseudonym, to consist of one word.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 96.

A BISHOP'S motto and a soldier's fame
Inspire our boys to work, and play the game.

1. One word the grain and chaff will separate;
   Two words will make success immediate.
2. Give island head; and further hints we note
   In words that rhyme with clock, and shell, and goat.
3. Riches and shrub will show, when mixed up well,
   His other name, if truth traditions tell.
4. An active quadruped you first select;
   Part of the head, and all its tail reject.
5. The word recalls a deed of bygone days,
   So it united follows in the phrase.
6. Choose the right foreign port; then may be seen
   Three English ones in battle, this, and queen.
7. Descent unbroken may a hint convey,
   Therefore a monarch makes it clear as day.
8. When ancient eighth is of a fifth bereft,
   The twentieth of present day is left.
9. Twelve-lettered adverb acts most suitably
   Till guessed; the central third alone we see.
10. For forty days an English Lent will last;
    Some thirty days Mohammedans will fast.

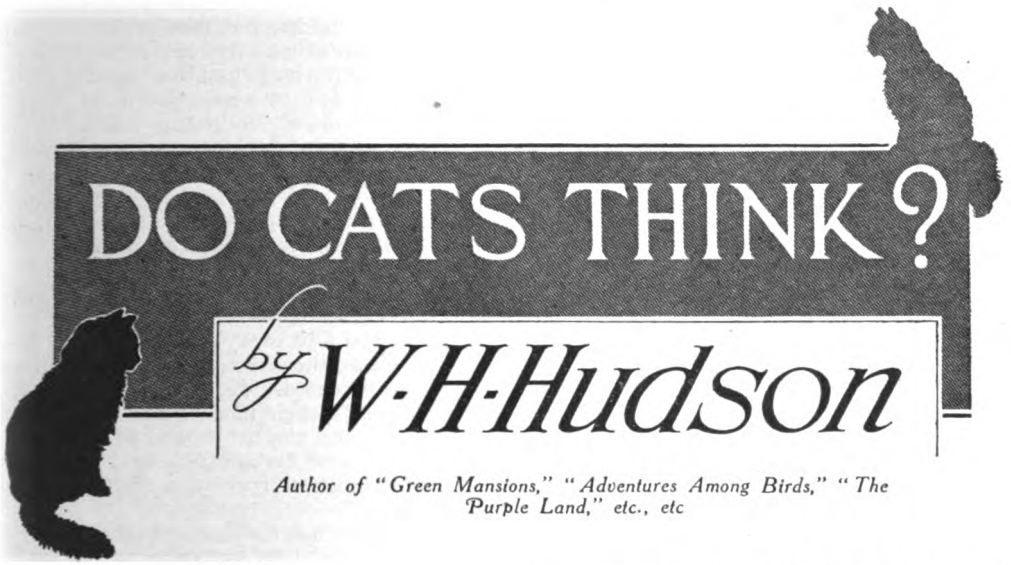
1.	W	inno	W
2.	I	nchcap	E
3.	N	athanie	L
4.	C	hil	L
5.	H	on	I
6.	E	usto	N
7.	S	oakin	G
8.	T	he	T
9.	E	ri	O
10.	R	amada	N

NOTES.—Proem. William of Wykeham, Manners makyth man; Duke of Wellington. Light 2. Inch, island; cape, head. Rock, bell, float; see Southey's verses. 3. Broom, wealth: Bartholomew. 4. Chinchilla; chin, part of the head. 5. The institution of the Order of the Garter. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* "So it," united, becomes *soit*. 6. Termini, in Sicily. Waterloo, Victoria. 7. Descent unbroken, persistent rain. Therefore a monarch, so a king. 8. Theta, eighth letter of Greek alphabet; the T, the twentieth of English alphabet. 9. Mysteriously.

"Neura" is accepted for the fifth light of No. 94.

Solvers are requested to send, with their answers to No. 97, their real names and addresses also. Unless post-cards are used, these should be written at the back of their solutions.

The A.E. will be grateful if solvers will kindly avoid the use of very flimsy note-paper.



DO CATS THINK?

by W. H. Hudson

Author of "Green Mansions," "Adventures Among Birds," "The Purple Land," etc., etc

I.

ONE day when standing at my window I noticed a pied wagtail running about in the road below in search of the small crumbs the starlings, sparrows, and others had left, when a big cat came over the road on its way home to the house next door. When within about four yards of the wagtail he stopped short, his body stiffened, and with eyes fixed on the bird he crouched down on the ground, and continued in that position motionless as a piece of stone except that the tip of his tail curved and uncurved and moved from side to side. The predatory instinct was alight and fiercely burning in him. Then came the advance—the slow crawling movement which is scarcely perceptible to a creature directly in front. The crawling movement continued until he was within about six feet of his prey, the wagtail meanwhile going on with his busy search for crumbs and appearing to take no notice of the cat—knowing, I suppose, that a stroke of his wings at any moment would place him out of danger, and that the exact moment had not yet come. Then the cat, when so near his bird, so intent on it, all at once stood up, unstiffened, and turning walked away deliberately to his own garden-gate and went in!

Now a cat cannot see a bird within easy distance on the ground without the desire for a bird, the most compelling impulse he knows, being roused in him; and that first stillness and fixed attention is but the first of a series of movements which go on automatically to the finish—till he makes his dash or spring, or till the bird flies away. Why, then, did this particular cat behave as he did and abandon a pursuit which was just as promising as many another he had engaged in? Here we are confronted with the old unsolved problem: Do animals reflect? Is even the mentally highest among them capable, in a case like this, of recognizing that the thing contemplated is impossible, and that the chase might as well be abandoned?

I really think he is; and actions like the one described, and many other actions of cats I have observed, serve to convince me that some of the higher animals, and especially in this largest-brained and most perfect mammalian, have something more than just the unreflecting intelligence which we find in all creatures, from whales and elephants to insects—something which in many instances cannot easily be distinguished from what we call reflection in ourselves.

The case of this next-door cat has served to remind me of another cat, the valued pet of a lady friend of mine who lived near London and did all she could to attract the birds to her grounds, also all she could to break her cat of his bird-hunting habits.

In summer, afternoon tea was always partaken of in the large garden at the back, or in the veranda overlooking it. An old apple-tree grew on the lawn, and the birds at tea-time used to congregate on its branches, waiting to be fed. She would then take a plateful of crumbs of bread and cake and throw these on the grass under the tree. The cat, having discovered this habit of his mistress, would always turn up at tea-time, and as soon as the crowd of birds dropped down on the crumbs and were busily engaged picking them up, he would begin his stalk, crawling in his crouching attitude across the

open green space of the lawn, and invariably just before the moment for making his dash they would fly up into the branches and wait till he got tired of waiting for them to come down. Then he would go back and sit beside his mistress's chair, watching the birds drop down again until the becrumbed bit of ground was full of them, and he would stalk them again with the same result as before.

My friend was distressed at her cat's action at first, and for several days tried to stop it; but the cat always defeated her, and in the end it began to amuse her to watch her pet's vain efforts to catch her little pensioners. She would say to her guests when taking up the plate of crumbs, " Now my cat is going to exhibit his talents for your admiration " ; and when the cat made his stalk and returned to them there would be much laughter at his expense. She would say too : " How wonderful that so intelligent an animal should go on day after day trying to do something he can't do and never discovering that it can't be done ! I dare say he will go on to the end without ever finding out that it is impossible to capture birds on the lawn by stalking them."

But the cat didn't go on to the end with the same method. One afternoon, to her surprise, when she took the crumbs he went with her, and after she had thrown them on the grass under the tree he seated himself in the very middle of the becrumbed area and waited for the birds to come down and be caught. The birds overhead waited for him to go away ; and a full hour was passed in this way — the cat very patient, the birds chirping and scolding and going and coming ; but they wouldn't come down. Then at last the cat returned to his mistress and the birds had their meal in peace. The stalk was not attempted then or ever again. But on the following afternoon the cat went again and placed himself in the middle of the crumbs, and again waited a full hour for the birds, and then as on the day before he gave it up. On the third day the whole thing was repeated, and the result was as before.

On the fourth afternoon the crumbs were taken to the usual place ; the lady came back to the table, and everyone prepared to look and laugh at the cat once more. But they were disappointed. He never moved : the birds came in their usual numbers and had their meal, and the cat looked at them from his place beside his mistress, and from that day he made no further attempt to capture them.

In this instance the cat had made a fool of himself all the time—a bigger fool when he changed his strategy than before—but the very fact that he did change it appears to show reflection. He didn't know the mind of a bird as well as we do, but he had hit on the idea—one *must* use the word in this case—that it was his conspicuous advance over the smooth lawn which alarmed and sent them away : that if he dispensed with the advance and established himself beforehand where the food was and sat still they would come to devour it, and he being on the spot would have no difficulty in catching them ! After giving this second plan three days' trial he was convinced that it was as useless as the former one, and so gave it up for good.

II.

THE next-door cat, described as stalking a wagtail in the foregoing part, was in a village over against Falmouth where I was spending the winter. The succeeding winter was spent in Penzance, and there were two cats in the house—a Tom and a Puss, if it be permissible to describe their sexes in that way—both black.

They soon established friendly relations

" As soon as the crowd of birds dropped down on the crumbs and

with me, and shared my meals—a saucer of milk at breakfast-time, a little meat or fish on a plate at early dinner, and again fish at the six o'clock tea, or if I had nothing but an egg they would have some cream. And very soon, when feeding them, I noticed the extraordinary difference in their respective characters.

Both were true cats, unlike any other creature in the animal world; and whenever they were out in the front garden and spied me at the open window they would run to the house, scale the porch, and, clinging with claws and twisting their elastic bodies round, get on to its roof; then with a flying leap on to a narrow ledge of the window and, after doubling another dangerous corner, jump into the room.

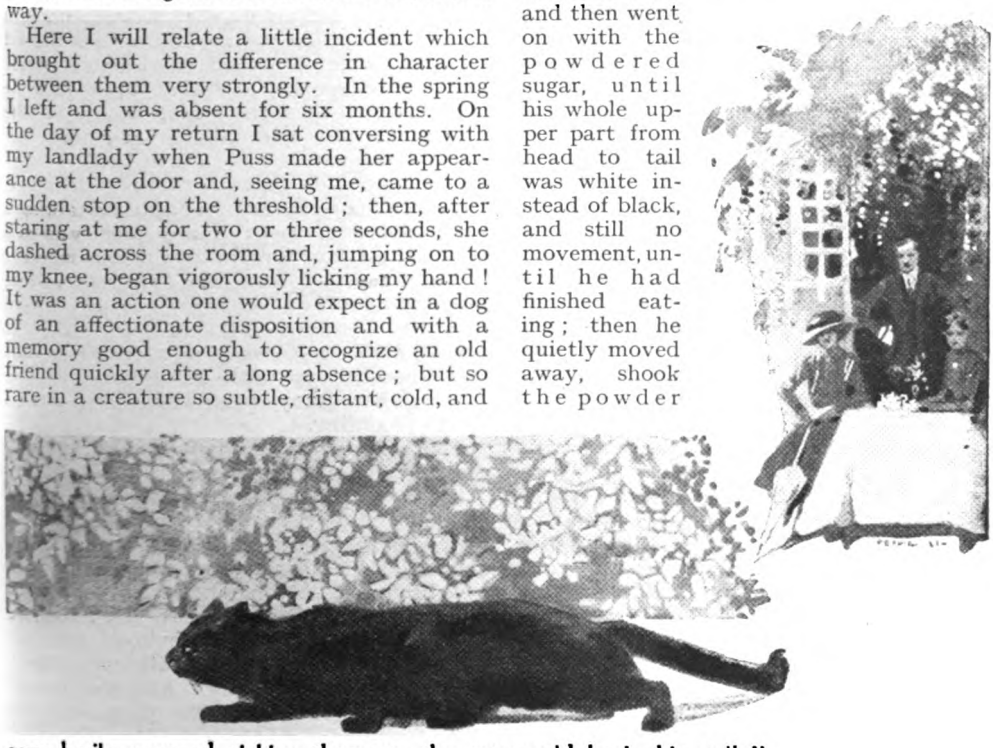
But Tom, albeit a town-bred indoor cat, in appearance a tame domestic animal with nothing but the sight of wild birds coming to be fed to keep the tiger burning bright in him, was at bottom a primitive—a savage; and being of that nature his manners lacked polish. When he played he scratched; his way of asking to be fed was by digging his claws into my leg, and when the plate was set on the floor he would greedily monopolize it. Puss, withdrawing a little space, would look at him, then at me, and only when I pushed or dragged him back would she advance and begin to eat in her nice fastidious way.

Here I will relate a little incident which brought out the difference in character between them very strongly. In the spring I left and was absent for six months. On the day of my return I sat conversing with my landlady when Puss made her appearance at the door and, seeing me, came to a sudden stop on the threshold; then, after staring at me for two or three seconds, she dashed across the room and, jumping on to my knee, began vigorously licking my hand! It was an action one would expect in a dog of an affectionate disposition and with a memory good enough to recognize an old friend quickly after a long absence; but so rare in a creature so subtle, distant, cold, and self-centred as the cat as to seem incredible—almost unnatural.

By and by Tom made his appearance and, after regarding me attentively for a few seconds, sat down quietly to listen to the conversation, which however didn't appear to interest him much. It would not have surprised me if he had yawned.

When feeding the cats it amused me to play on the nerviness of Puss by dropping a pinch of salt or powdered sugar on her back without allowing her to detect me doing it. This would startle her and she would stare all round to ascertain the cause. Then, when she began to eat again, another pinch, which would alarm her still more. A third little shower falling on her back would make her dash right to the other end of the room, when she would stand glaring about her for some time; then, gradually recovering courage, but still suspicious, she would return to the plate. But a fourth pinch of salt would be too much for her, and, jumping up, she would tear out of the room and down the stairs and keep away for half an hour or longer.

When I tried the experiment on Tom he paid no attention: he was too well occupied with his food to look up or to shake the sugar off. Once, to see how much he would stand, I continued dropping salt on him until it was finished and then went on with the powdered sugar, until his whole upper part from head to tail was white instead of black, and still no movement, until he had finished eating; then he quietly moved away, shook the powder



were busily engaged picking them up, the cat would begin his stalk."

off, and settled down for a nap by the fire.

If Puss ever divined that I was to blame in the matter—that I had caused the excruciating pinches of salt to fall on her—as no doubt Tom with his superior intelligence did, it caused no break in our pleasant relations; but there was another matter about which we were in perpetual disagreement.

It was perhaps but a part or a result of her nervy temperament that caused her to take an intense, an almost painful, interest in any person and in everything going on in the house. Thus, if a ring or knock came at the front door, she would jump up and rush downstairs to see who the caller was, who was answering the knock, and what it was all about. And it was the same if she heard the voices of persons talking downstairs or anywhere in the house : she must go and see about it. As these goings and comings were very frequent she needed an open door, and often, when it was cold or the window was open and I didn't want a draught in the room, I would shut it. Then there would be a great to-do : Puss would run to the door, examine it, and run back to me to inform me that it was closed, then back to the door again, and so on until I would go and open it and let her out. But she wished to be in, not out, and so would begin scratching and mewing until I opened to her again. But she would not consent to remain with the door closed. Eventually we compromised by having the door closed, but not tightly, so that with her claws she could catch the edge of the wood and pull the door open herself when the door-bell or some sound made it necessary for her to go out.

But as there were times when I would not consent to this arrangement and resolutely kept the door shut tightly, there was never an end to our quarrel—it is going on still. And she is still trying to make me understand her and do exactly what she wants me to do without blundering the thing. One could put her requests and pleadings and expostulations into words : " Do you know that you have again shut the door so that I can't get my claws in the wood to pull it open for myself ? What am I to do if a ring at the bell should come now ? How many, many times have I explained to you that the door must not be shut tight—that it prevents me from running out at a moment's notice to see to things ? Are you so hopelessly lacking in intelligence that you cannot yet understand it ? "

I cannot but believe that this cat is capable of thought—that our lasting quarrel about the door would have quickly ended if I had resolutely closed it against her wish at the first. But she distinctly recognizes that I am master of the door and that it is only through me that she can have it in the position she desires, and that as I have frequently shown myself obedient to her wish she can only look on my act in shutting it tight as a blunder—a piece of stupidity on my part.

The good old phrase of " dumb animals " has fallen into discredit since we made the discovery that animals are not dumb but have a language (all except the earthworms and slugs) by means of which they communicate with one another. It is, however, a limited language designed to express a few and simple things—desires and emotions in sounds familiar and easily understood, since they never vary. Thus, the cat's mewing, with but slight changes in tone, is her only way of telling you, or another cat, that she wants something, but what that something is she leaves you or the other cat to find out.

Now, when I consider the cat I have been writing about in her anxious strivings to make me understand her wants, and her manifest puzzlement and astonishment at my failure to respond to her demands when it does not suit my pleasure to do so, I can only compare her to a deaf and dumb person who has been taught little or nothing and has nothing but a few comprehensible signs with which to communicate with those around him. He is cut off by silence from us, but as he is one of our species and we know that thought is before speech and exists independent of speech, and that thought is a function of the human brain, we know that he thinks. In like manner, reading the mind of this cat as well as I am able, I come to the conclusion that she thinks—albeit her thoughts may be very few and very simple compared with those of any human being above the age of four or five, and even with those of a person born deaf and dumb.

III.

A LADY in Kensington, a cat-lover, has favoured me with an account of one of her many pets which seems well worth recording.

It came about by chance that a pup, a very few days old, was sent to the house by a friend, and that the gift of a kitten, whose blue surprised eyes had not long been opened, was received at nearly the same time. My informant and her mother and sister were delighted to get them both, as they were wanting both a dog and a cat, and now they would be reared from babyhood together and would become familiar with each other's ways and live in harmony. And it all turned out just as they had hoped. Kittie and pup slept together in one bed, fed from the same saucer and plate, and their whole time

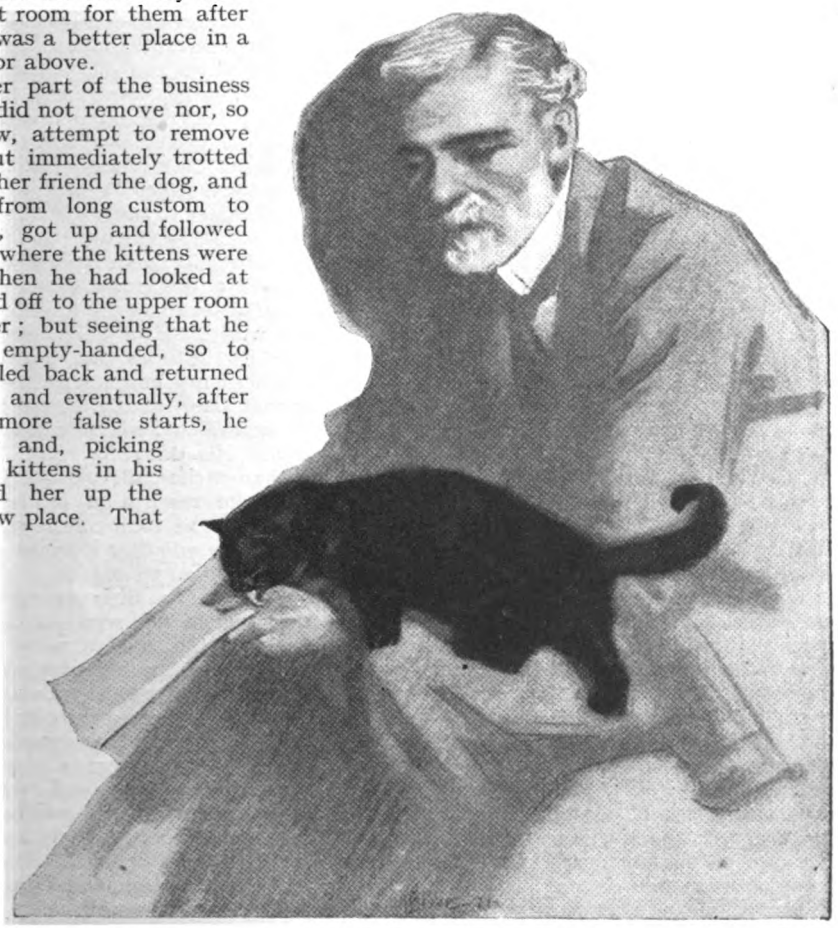
when they were not sleeping was spent in play.

When full grown the cat was very small and the dog about two-thirds the size of a collie, so that there was a considerable discrepancy in their sizes, but this made no difference in their companionship and games together; and both were singularly gentle, nice-mannered, and good-tempered animals.

When Pussy came of age she had an affair on one of her evening strolls, and later, when her time came near, she all at once became excessively anxious as to the proper place for her expected family. Every room in the house, from basement to attics, was visited in turn and minutely examined. The ladies watched her movements with deep interest without interfering except to open closed doors for her when she returned again and again to reinspect any room which had first attracted her. In due time the kittens came, and a day or two later Pussy came to the conclusion that they were not in the best room for them after all—that there was a better place in a room on the floor above.

Now the queer part of the business comes in: she did not remove nor, so far as they saw, attempt to remove them herself, but immediately trotted off in search of her friend the dog, and he, well able from long custom to understand her, got up and followed her to the spot where the kittens were lying. Then, when he had looked at them, she started off to the upper room and he after her; but seeing that he was following empty-handed, so to speak, she doubled back and returned to the kittens, and eventually, after two or three more false starts, he understood her and, picking up one of the kittens in his mouth, followed her up the stairs to the new place. That was as far as his understanding went, and she had again to conduct him back to the others and repeat the whole performance, until in the end the kittens were all removed by the dog and she was happy in her new quarters. But only for a day: it was not the ideal spot after all, and another removal had to be made. Again the dog was summoned and did it all again, with less trouble than on the first occasion. And again Pussy became dissatisfied and there was a third removal, and from first to last there were so many removals that the ladies lost count of their number.

Now the instinct of the cat and of practically all mammals in which the young are born helpless and continue many days in that state is, when the parent desires to remove them to a safer or more suitable place, to pick them up in her mouth and remove them one by one herself. So ineradicable is this instinct that it persists in the dog after thousands of years of domestication, and we know that the cat's instincts are even less affected by such a state than the dog's. Why, then, in this case did she not obey so



"On the day of my return Puss dashed across the room and, jumping on to my knee, began vigorously licking my hand."

powerful an impulse instead of relegating the task to a dog, an animal of another species?

Bergson would perhaps suggest or say that it was intuition, an indefinable faculty higher than either instinct or reason. There is no such thing: there is nothing but reason and instinct, or inherited memory, to prompt the actions of all animals, from earthworm and emmet to elephant. The only possible explanation of the cat's actions is that she found herself powerless, probably after trial, to accomplish the task herself; that she then remembered her friend the dog, mentally visualizing him as a big strong creature with a big mouth to carry, and remembering also that he was obedient to her and quick to respond to her wishes. And she accordingly went to him for help, and he being by chance exceptionally intelligent did not fail her, although we cannot say that his reasoning powers were equal to hers. Her action undoubtedly shows reasoning of a higher kind than that of the cat described in the first part, though that too was reasoning. His impulse was to dash at the bird, but in the pause before it could be made he listened to the still small voice of the higher faculty telling him that he would fail again as he had failed many times before, and the small voice prevailed.

IV.

THE fact of telepathy is now familiar by that name to everybody. But authentic instances of telepathy between man and animals are rare, and are confined to our domestic animals that rank highest in the scale of nature. Most cases are concerned with the dog, as, for example, the very remarkable one related some years ago by Sir Rider Haggard in the *Times*. An even more remarkable case of telepathic communication between man and horse—an old Sussex squire and his favourite cob—is given by M. A. Lower, author of "Sussex Worthies," in his miscellany entitled "Contributions to Literature."

That such cases should be extremely rare is only what might be expected, seeing that when it is undoubtedly a telepathic message, explicable in no other way, as when it produces a phantasm of the living, as it is called, it can emanate only from a mind in extreme distress or agony, or in a moment of deadly peril or suffering, and often enough at the moment of death. Again, we know that in these instances of extreme agitation there must always be a close bond of affection between sender and recipient, such as may exist between two close friends or near and dear relations, and, as we also know, can and does often exist between a human being and a favourite or pet animal in the higher orders.

That such communication between mind and mind—brain-waves as they are sometimes called—should be possible between man and animals is but a further proof that they are, mentally, very near to us; that their brains function even as ours do, far as we have risen above them in all mental powers.

Here, then, in conclusion of the article, I will give the first case of telepathy, as I consider it, I have met with between human being and cat.

The person concerned is the late Mrs. Barry, wife of the late Bishop Barry, and the account of what took place was written by Lady Alderson at Mrs. Barry's dictation. Mr. Ralph Alderson in looking over his late mother's papers found it, and has passed it on to me to make what use of it I wish, and I accordingly transcribe it here.

"In 1891 we left Knapdale to take up our residence in The Cloisters at Windsor. For some time before I had a favourite black cat who had the distinction of not possessing a single white hair. She was unusually attached to me on account of my having saved her life from a dog, just two minutes before her first kitten was born—she had only one. The shock to the poor thing was so great that it was with difficulty I saved her life, and her terror at every sound was so pitiful that I gave up a small empty room to her and her kitten, locking her in, and allowing no one to go near but myself. I waited on her for a whole month, until she quieted down and allowed her kitten to see the world. Ever after when she had kittens she had the same attack of nerves and required my undivided attention. We were living then in an interesting old manor-house which had belonged to Oliver Cromwell. His daughter, Mrs. Ireton, was said to haunt the gallery: the house has always had the reputation of being haunted. I feel I ought to mention this, although I do not know whether it could in any way have affected the cat.

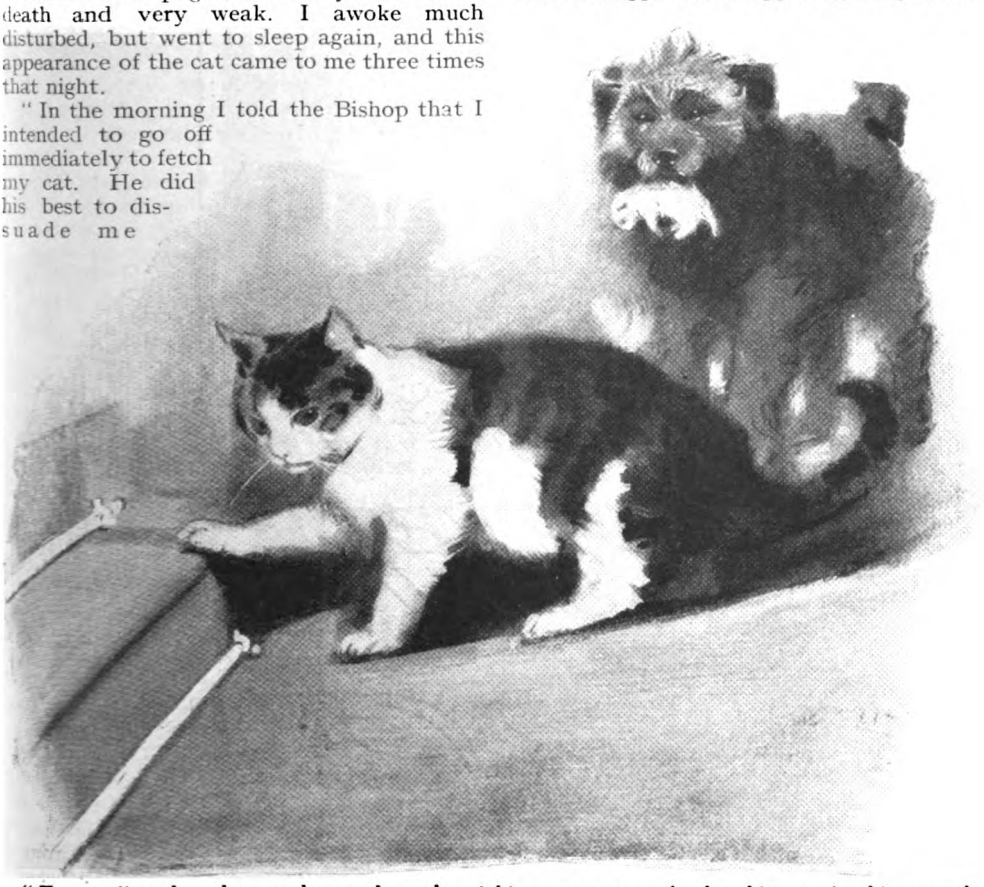
"After the Bishop's appointment up to the time of our removal the cat was much on my mind, as I dreaded the change and disturbance for her which all ordinary cats without nerves hate. But the gardener was left in the house, to take charge of it for a new tenant, so I made special arrangements that the cat should remain in his care with good board wages till I was quite settled, when I was to write for it and he would see her safely on her journey to Windsor.

"Time went on, and I did not worry about my cat and was waiting until all was ready, when one night I had a dream. I was walking—as I thought—in the garden at Knapdale, in a path under the wall, which

was a favourite place of mine and where the black cat used to follow me up and down, when I heard a piteous cry, and looking up saw my Puss, standing on the top of the wall, in lamentable plight, evidently starved to death and very weak. I awoke much disturbed, but went to sleep again, and this appearance of the cat came to me three times that night.

"In the morning I told the Bishop that I intended to go off immediately to fetch my cat. He did his best to dissuade me from doing so, as he said I could telegraph to the gardener and the cat would arrive without any trouble. But I could not feel satisfied, and started off immediately after breakfast.

"On my arrival at Knapdale I found the house in the possession of workmen. On entering no gardener was to be seen, and no cat. Filled with anxiety, I asked every man I met if a black cat had been seen, but with no result. At last a woman in a house near by told me that the gardener had been dismissed summarily, and being no doubt unwilling I should know it had departed and left the cat to its fate. This woman had heard the poor thing crying and had tried to get at it and give it milk, but it was always terrified and too wild to come near her. It occurred to me to go and walk under the wall I had seen in my dream, and which the cat had no doubt always associated with me, and call her. In a few minutes I saw a wild, haggard face appear, gazing at me as if it could not believe the evidence of its senses, then down she came and rushed into my arms, and clung to me frantically. I carried her into the room we both remembered, and found her nothing but skin and bone and very weak. I went into the village and fed her with milk and fish, bought a hamper into which she crawled of her own accord, and during the many hours' journey home she lay quite still and purred whenever I stroked her. She took a fancy to her new home and settled down at once.



"Eventually the dog understood, and, picking up one of the kittens in his mouth, followed her up the stairs."

"This story is perfectly true; who can explain the fact of the cat spirit being able to make an impression on a human spirit so as to induce me to act as I did and only just in time to save her life?"

[*Mr. Hudson will be pleased to receive anecdotes of our readers' pets, which we will forward.*]

THE MAN WHO GOT OUT

A Test Match Story

by

REEVES SHAW

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES CROMBIE

"THERE'S another one, nurse," grinned the invalid. "Tell them the same old tale, please."

Nurse Duncan smiled as she moved noiselessly to the telephone standing on a small table by the bedside of Full-Stop Mortimer, smiled and shook her head in gentle reproof. "It's awfully hard not to tell lies," she said.

"Don't worry. The Recording Angel will put them all down to me. But up to now you've been so clever that the score-sheet's blank. Who's this new disturber of my morning peace, I wonder?"

At the 'phone the nurse was quickly getting to grips with the truth. "Who is that—Mr. Wainwright?" ("Oh, my Lord, Wainwright!" *from the bed.* "He'll want some handling! Stick it, nurse, stick it!") "Mr. Wainwright of England? Mr. *Roger* Wainwright? Well, yes, but what do you *want?* Mr. Wainwright of the M.C.C.? What's that—a foot regiment? No, of course not, Mounted Camel Corps. Beg pardon, *cricket* club. Oh, yes, but what do you——speak to Mr. Mortimer? I'm sorry, that's impossible. Quite. I said *quite!* He must on no account be disturbed. I'm afraid not! Strictest orders. Whose orders? *My* orders. I'm the nurse in charge. Good-bye!" The receiver went back on its hook with a very conclusive click. "And now, Mr. Mortimer, if you will kindly remove your pipe from your mouth, I will very gladly take your temperature."

Mortimer gave forth the heartiest roar that patient ever let loose in a sick room. "Temperature be hanged!" he cried. "If you must make out your silly old chart, shove it down as one hundred and seven not out. I'm fit enough to swim the Channel!"

"In that case my services are not needed. But before I go I should like to say that if you think it a joke to drag a woman out of her bed at two in the morning to come and nurse a——"

"I'm sorry, nurse. Honestly, absolutely sorry. But it's no joke, no jape of any kind. It's about the most serious thing that can happen to a fellow. I needed you last night. I need you now, every bit as much perhaps as if I were almost kicking the bucket. We've been so busy answering the 'phone that we've had no time to look at the morning papers, but if Wragg has brought them in—oh, yes, they're there, look—a glance may give you some hint of the excitement. I wouldn't mind a bit of a peep at 'em myself, nurse, if you think I'm well enough!"

She crossed the room and took up the *Daily Wire.* Her first concern, not perhaps unnaturally, was the agony column, but this proving unfruitful she scanned page after page with the steady, deliberate scrutiny women accord to newspapers.

"Try the sporting page," growled Mortimer, and devoted his complete attention to lighting his refilled pipe.

Nurse Duncan discovered the racing news, learnt that favourites failed at Lingfield, noticed without a thrill the day's programme at Hurst Park, saw that rain had caused the

abandonment of many cricket matches, and then cried :—

"Oh, is this it ?"

"Yes, that's it. What does it say ?"

"It's all in big headlines. 'Sudden illness of Mr. K. H. Mortimer.' And they've got a portrait of you. 'Unable to play in to-day's Test Match. Severe blow to England. Exclusive.'"

"That's right—exclusive. Wragg rang 'em up at the same time as he 'phoned the Nursing Home for you. Smart paper, the *Wire*; they rattled it pretty quick into their London edition."

Molly Duncan came to the foot of the bed and leaned on the curved wooden rail. There was anger in her brown eyes; contempt in the curve of her mouth. Mortimer tried another match for his already blazing tobacco, and put up a smoke-screen which served but very little purpose. Still, a man must do something.

"You mean to say," said Nurse Duncan, very slowly, "that you have been chosen to play for England, that all the world is expecting you to do so, and that you are trying to get out of it by shamming illness ?"

Mortimer coughed. It was only an overdose of nicotine, but he fervently hoped it would sound a little like pneumonia.

"Yes, that's it. Sounds rotten, doesn't it ? But it's absolutely necessary. Absolutely, on my honour. I'd give anything to play to-day; anything to get the chance of knocking that Australian stuff all over the field. A dream of my life's gone west—a dream for which I've worked a whole summer. I came into county cricket this year with the one idea of catching the eye of their majesties the selectors. I toured all over England for Sussex, playing dismal games in dismal towns, merely to pile up the few necessary centuries and take the few wickets required to advertise myself. There was no Henley, no Ascot, no jolly jaunts in little yachts, no idle holidays at all. Everything was sacrificed to this one desire—to help old England get back the Ashes. And now I can't do it; now all I shall know of the match is what the papers tell me. And if we lose—God, if we lose! Does it *sound* like a joke ?"

"The best gentleman bat in the kingdom."

"But why not simply tell them that you don't want to play ? I mean 'that circumstances have arisen, etc.,' and so on. Why all this fuss ?"

"Because anything short of a point-of-death scare would send 'em howling mad; this staid old inn would be invaded by a yelling mob of athletic dervishes. There'd be Wainwright himself, and probably Keith, half-a-dozen of the Thugs, a small battalion of Old Vaughanians, and a squalling squad of nephews and possibly nieces. And all in *anger*, mark you. They'd nose me out wherever I hid myself, and if they didn't drag me by main force to the Oval, they'd stop with me all day to know the reason why. They'd call me all the names they've called me before, only this time they'd strengthen 'em a bit. You see, this isn't the first time."

"You make a habit of not playing for England ?"

"Oh, good Lord, no! But I've 'disappointed' 'em, as they call it, half-a-dozen times before. They gave me the label of Full-Stop Mortimer at school, and it's done

duty ever since. I never could see why a fellow wanted to go on doing things in public which he'd shown to himself he could do. Not unless he wanted to swank. There are such a lot of other things a chap wants to try his strength at. They popped that Full-Stop tag on me at Vaughan because I let the chap I beat in the heavies box for the school at Aldershot. He won, so what did it matter? I got a Soccer blue at Cambridge, and then because I decided to go in for Rugger there was a devil of a noise. It beats me why a man keeps continually doing the thing he knows he can. Take golf, for instance. Where's the fun in going round time after time in seventy-five? When you get like that you ought to see if you can do it left-handed, or try badminton or something. Keeping on keeping on's a yawn of a business. I'm a heretic, I know, and perhaps it's by way of punishment for my creed that I'm not allowed to play in the one game I want to. But I simply mustn't."

The door opened, and Mortimer's servant appeared. "Well, Wragg, what is it?"

"Lady Cynthia Acton is here, sir, and insists on remaining until she is better satisfied—her own words, sir—regarding your health. I have done my best, sir, but Lady Cynthia refuses to go. Begging your pardon, sir, but Lady Cynthia is a little purposeful."

Mortimer smiled. Wragg, with all his diplomacy and tact, could not hope to beat down the wilfulness of Lord Blaysdale's younger daughter. "By the way, what about those telephone messages, Wragg?"

"I've 'phoned them all, sir. Mr. Buswell is at Deauville; Mr. Reggie Cheape still at Cowes; Mr. Worthington Paine in Scotland, sir, for the grouse. The dog days, you know, sir."

"No one to come to me in my hour of need. That's my last chance gone, nurse. I must get worse, rapidly worse. What do you suggest about Lady Cynthia, Wragg?"

"It occurred to me, sir, that if some ocular evidence of your—of your indisposition could be provided it might have the desired effect. If, for example, nurse would go to Lady Cynthia and personally describe the symptoms which most alarm——"

"Excellent! Nurse, I wonder if you would? You must, if my little scheme is to succeed. Will you, please?"

Nurse Duncan had evidently not quite made up her mind whether she was assisting in a righteous cause or not. It was several seconds before she replied, and doubtless the lure of playing a winning hand against another woman exercised its inevitable attraction upon her.

"As it's the last thing I shall be called upon to do for you, I'll do it," she said. "Kindly take me to Lady Cynthia, Mr. Wragg."

"Now what in the world does she mean by that?" pondered Mortimer, as the door closed behind the two. He reached for the *Racing Stable*, and settled back comfortably on the pillows. Apparently his interest in the racing news was not catholic, for, his ears alert for any signs of Lady Cynthia's departure, his eyes continued to gaze at a most insignificant paragraph which stated that "Will be sold by auction, with or without engagement, Romping Home, believed sound, a good winner, without reserve, engaged in the Leiston Handicap to-day." The minutes dragged on, but no sound of closing doors gave the welcome notice of Lady Cynthia's departure.

SUDDENLY a shadow fell across the bed, and casually Mortimer's eyes looked up from the paper. In half a second the *Racing Stable* had collapsed on the counterpane; his pipe, leaving a trail of ashes across the sheets, had rolled to the floor, and he himself was under the bedclothes, with but one eye alone in furtive action.

But he might have saved himself all the trouble. Alan Acton, the fourteen-year-old brother of Cynthia, his head and shoulders shoved through the wide-open window, his body supported on the rungs of a painter's long ladder—Mortimer had overlooked the fact that the man next door was having his chambers redecorated—had seen everything: paper, pipe, and panic.

Beneath the bedclothes Mortimer waited for the case for the prosecution to commence; he did not expect to get off lightly, for Alan had been boasting to all his chums about his comradeship with the best gentleman bat in the kingdom. Mortimer hoped for nothing more than that Alan wouldn't scathe for ever; he'd like to get it over before nurse came back.

Alan was in no hurry to say anything at all; he made no attempt to enter the room, but remained on his perch obviously thinking of the really correct thing to remark. Mortimer neither stirred nor hoped.

Then it came. Clear and slow, with just that little bit of venom that shut teeth and a curl of the upper lip impart.

"*Dirt!*"

The head and shoulders disappeared downwards, their owner well content with the value obtained for the shilling he had given the painter-man to shift his ladder.

Mortimer sat up. He felt properly whipped. If Alan had said a lot it wouldn't have hurt so much; a slanging never had bothered him. But that one word hurt. The kid must have been feeling it pretty deeply to let it go at that.

"'Look here, Cynthia,' broke in Mortimer, 'I am *not* going to the Oval—I am officially dangerously ill.'"

Nurse Duncan appeared again, cloaked and bonneted. Without any sign of interest she retrieved the pipe from the floor and handed it to Mortimer. " Lady Cynthia has gone, and I'm going. Owing to the alleged seriousness of this case a day nurse was of course arranged for as well. She will now take up her duties, but I scarcely think it advisable for me to meet her and explain the peculiar difficulties of your case."

" Good heavens, I can't go through it all with another nurse ! Besides, it's no longer necessary," he added, gloomily.

" I'm afraid it cannot be helped."

" It can be helped easily enough. I shall not let her in ! "

" She is already in. As I was packing my bag in the spare room I heard your servant admit her. I slipped in here quickly to avoid her, and I must go at once while she is taking off her bonnet and cloak. Good-bye ! "

FIVE minutes passed before the new nurse felt it necessary to visit the sick room. In that five minutes Mortimer wrestled with the problem and found himself a bad second to Solomon. There was no wisdom left anywhere in him. He hadn't foreseen half the things he ought to have foreseen to make a good job of it. That curtain left undrawn across the window—the carelessness of not anticipating the relief nurse !—what would this second nurse be like ? he wondered. He couldn't explain all over again, anyhow. She would have to go in a temper if she wasn't the sort to take a joke properly.

There came a firm tap on the door, and the new nurse entered. She seemed a nervous kind of a woman. Or stealthy. One of the two. She crossed to the window and drew the curtains. Too late, thought Mortimer, bitterly. He was lying on his side, so he could not see her. Still she was very quiet, and his patience gave out. He turned gently on his back. She was at the dressing-table, toying with the things upon it, her back towards him. A tall, fine-looking woman. Graceful shoulders. Jolly funny nurse, though, not to want to have a look at her patient. Oh, perhaps she thought he was asleep. He'd settle that quickly. A swift end to all this pretence business. One sharp knock, and then see how she'd take it.

" Nurse ! "

" Yes ? "

" I'd like a whisky and soda."

" Ring the bell for Wragg and you shall have it."

Mortimer nearly broke a blood-vessel. " *Cynthia !* " he cried

" That's one of the very few good guesses you've made this morning. May I ask when you are going to get up ? The car's outside waiting to take you to the Oval, and there's very little time. If we lose the toss——"

" Look here, Cynthia," broke in Mortimer; " there are one or two things I don't understand, and there are six or seven that you don't. The principal of the latter are that I am *not* going to the Oval, that I am officially dangerously ill with homicidal tendencies, and that you cannot remain here. You simply can't. It's positively monstrous. A young and beautiful woman like you breaking into the bedroom of an entirely unhealthy young man, to whom you're not even temporarily engaged. I don't know how the devil you got here ! "

" Brains, Morty, brains ! And, with or without engagement, I'm stopping. You're not half clever enough for this shamming stunt, Morty. Neville told me it was very nearly one o'clock last night when he left you, and that you were then showing no signs hopeful to the undertaker. Then——"

" Oh, Neville did, did he ? "

" Then when I called this morning with anxious inquiries I wrung from Wragg the knowledge that you had been coughing all night, while a few minutes later the nurse informed me that you had been unconscious all the time. Add to this the small fact that I noticed the 'phone was plugged through to your bedroom, which isn't usually done if a patient needs peace and quiet, and the rest is easy. Hop 336, please," she asked the exchange.

" What's that ? " inquired Mortimer, feebly.

" The Oval. If there were time to spare I'd ask you why you were doing this back-sliding business. But explanations will keep. Hallo, is that the Oval ? Will you please tell Mr. Wainwright that Mr. Mortimer—shut *up*, Morty !—will be ready to play in half an hour ? You're very glad ? A speedy recovery ? *Very !* Good-bye. And now, Morty, what about it ? "

" It can't be done. You're making it devilish awkward for me, you know. I say, Cynthia, how *did* you get in here, uniform and all ? "

" Luck, laddie—pure, blind luck, with a dash of the aforementioned brains. As I was so unceremoniously bundled out by your minions, whom should I meet coming into the courtyard but Kitty Dale, who taught me all the nursing I ever learned in '17. A good sport and a good pal, Kitty. In two half ticks I learnt that she was coming here to nurse *you*. In three more she was in the car with me, listening to my little yarn. A quick-change act in the car with me, and here I am. Did you notice I pulled the curtains back again when you

asked for a whisky and soda? You did? That was the signal to Kitty to say that all was well. She was a trifle worried."

The telephone bell rang, and a long arm stretched out from the bed to grasp the instrument. But Cynthia was there first.

"Yes, these are Mr. Mortimer's chambers—yes, thank you, I'll tell him. Mr. Alan Acton, you say? All right." She turned to Mortimer. "My brother Alan wishes the nurse in charge to tell Mr. Mortimer that England have won the toss and are going to bat. That's lucky. It gives us half an hour or so longer."

"But——"

"There isn't a 'but' left in the whole business. I'm giving you just ten minutes to set your brain in order. Then I shall begin to put in action the menace of sanctions, or whatever they call 'em. I warn you I shall go right through with the job. I shall stay here till you *do* get up, no matter if it's this morning or at three a.m. the day after the day after to-morrow. And I sha'n't care if mamma or papa and the editor of *London Spite* do make a week or two's noise about it. Me *versus* Mortimer has begun!"

Mortimer realized that the time of words was past; action was now required, but just what particular brand of action he could not quite see. Cynthia seemed perfectly happy and confident; she had moved the telephone, which was to be her staunchest ally, to the dressing-table, where it was safely out of Mortimer's way, and she was now very busily and very needlessly re-arranging two or three brace of perfectly well-disciplined hairs. The summons of the telephone bell interrupted this pastime, and listening at the receiver she heard Alan's voice again:—

"*England—six for one. Hobbs—out, six. Mortimer is number five on the card.*"

She repeated the message aloud, and, white with anger, turned upon Mortimer. Gone now was her pleasant air of mistress of the ceremonies; gone now, too, her humour and her pose of patience. Alan's brief message of disaster had stirred the tempest in her, had changed her temper and her plan.

"England, six for one! And you, third wicket down, lie there and listen and laugh at the jolly good joke you're playing! Well, laugh! You won't have me for audience. I'm finished with the joke; it's a bit too grim for me. It's the end of a dream, too, the end of a man I thought was a man. There's one last chance, if you want it. I'll wait eight minutes in the car for you; if you're down by then, all ready in your flannels, I'll drive you to the Oval, perhaps in time. Or you can turn over and go to sleep, whichever you like.

A LITTLE over seven minutes later K. H. Mortimer, with fifteen seconds and his boots in hand, jumped into the waiting car. Cynthia was herself again.

"Unconditional?" she asked, smiling.

"Not quite. The one condition is that I can have this car at any time I want it this afternoon. Agreed? Thanks. Do you mind if I put my boots on? Eight minutes is not really quite long enough for a full-sized man to dress. And answering the 'phone cost me something like twenty seconds."

"The 'phone?"

"A bit more of the gloomy Alan. Somebody else has crept back to the pavilion for something under ten. I s'pose Gregory's making 'em bump a bit. I'm next man in, so I hope there won't be any more mishaps for a minute or two."

They were south of the river now, twisting and bumping about between tramcars and brewers' drays. A matter of four minutes and they would be at the Oval; ten, and Mortimer would be gloved and padded. Cynthia's light hand fell upon his arm.

"You haven't told me *yet* why you've been playing the fool," she said.

"I'm coming to dinner to-night," he answered. "I'll tell you then, if you don't go back on your word about this car. It's a promise, isn't it?"

"Of course! We're there!" she cried, triumphantly. "Now run like mad, and the best of luck!"

He passed through the little door at the back of the huge pavilion, ran up the stairs, and hurried through the great windowed room that overlooks the playing field. The steady silence of the tremendous crowd told its tale; England were battling grimly again, fighting against misfortune as severe as it was early. A glance at the score-board—twenty-four for two—and Mortimer's shoulder pushed open the dressing-room door.

"Hallo, Wainwright! Why arrayed so completely for the wicket? I thought mine was the next knock?"

The face of England's captain would have sent wild with despair a conscientious film producer, who loves nothing but continuity of expression. Wainwright had half a second to decide once and for all whether Mortimer was friend or foe, whether he had been playing the goat with Serious Cricket or whether he had dragged himself from a bed of death to save the side from defeat and disgrace, whether a punch on the head or an emotional embrace about the knees should be his portion. And Wainwright failed dismally to pass judgment.

"Good God!" was all he could find to say. Wherein he was wise; many an English skipper has said too much.

Others crowded round, besieging Mortimer with questions. Laughingly, he answered them, strapping on his pads. The more curious, the more insistent, commenced to put him through the third degree almost, and the red light shone from his eyes. But a groan from the crowd—that long, low, rumbling sob of Surrey which tells that a good man has gone—scattered them. Mortimer carefully selected a bat, glanced at Wainwright's anxious face, and came close to him.

"Will eighty do, old man?" he said, very quietly, so none but Wainwright heard.

"Eh? Oh, don't be a fool! We want all you can get."

"I can only get eighty. But won't that make you smile a bit? Cheer up, Clump, old son! I'll make you laugh if I have any luck."

They gave him a tired cheer as he made his long walk to the wicket. There was not a lot of hope left in the crowd; thirty-eight for three, on a pitch as good as they make them. They didn't know Mortimer as they knew Hobbs and Hendren and D. J. Knight and other giants—Londoners themselves. A friendly cheer, but not that gallant roar which greets the idol. They hoped a little, but gloom was in their hearts.

Mortimer played his first ball, the last of the over, slowly between point and cover. "Come!" he shouted, and the steady "pro" at the other end woke up with a jerk and ran for his life. Safely home, he looked towards the newcomer in faint rebuke.

"A wonderful catch, they called it in the papers. Nobody called it a wonderful

Mortimer raised his bat in a gesture of mild apology, and laughed. The crowd saw the laugh, and liked it. Here was a man with a bit of nerve, a man who, however else he fell, would not frighten himself out. "F.H.O." has more victims than "L.B.W."

Mortimer was no hurricane hitter like Jessop, but his style was free, and he wasted

panic; he refused to run, on occasion, the second run when it was purely a gift. "By gum," commented a hundred someones in the crowd, "he's pinching the bowling! Pinching as sure as though the other bloke was number eleven instead of number three. By gum, he's got a nerve to do that with Yorkshire's best!"

stroke. Yet for artistry it appealed more to Mortimer than any other in his innings."

no time to "play himself in." A four off the third and a three from the last ball of the over showed that Gregory could be hit if the batsman knew how. A boundary and a single off the next over brought him facing the fast bowler again.

And now Mortimer went mad. He took risks that were obvious to a schoolboy. He insisted on short runs which put Wainwright and others greater than Wainwright into a

But Yorkshire's best didn't mind. Yorkshire's best didn't understand, didn't guess for a moment that time was the essence of the contract. All that Yorkshire's best knew was that Mortimer was playing a mighty fine game, was rattling the bowling, and was taking a heap of responsibility from his own stolid shoulders. If Mortimer wanted him to run, he'd run; if Mortimer cried "Stay!" he'd stay. It was good fun,

and good cricket. Of course it might have been different if Mortimer hadn't smiled "Sorry!" once as they patted the pitch between overs.

They came in to lunch with thirty-nine to Mortimer's credit, and a dozen to Yorkshire's best. In front of the pavilion the crowd wrapped itself round Mortimer, the man who had not been afraid. Bit by bit they were beginning to like him; it would be quite all right if it wasn't swank. Closer acquaintance assured them it was not swank, but ability, and judgment born of ability. Mortimer was the stuff all right, and if they couldn't gather that from Mortimer himself, they learnt it from the laughing, unmalicious eyes of Yorkshire's best as side by side the pair barged through the now more happy throng.

People ate their lunches, talked Mortimer, and grew cheerful. When things are going better for the home side Kennington Oval is paradise enow, even though there are no boughs and Craig no longer supplies the verses. One boundary makes many an optimist, and Mortimer had reached the ropes a good half-dozen times. And his first stroke after lunch was a clip past cover that bit the fingers of the City clerk who tried to stop it at the fringe of the crowd.

The game was as lively now as ever a match has been; a sturdy roar greeted Mortimer's fifty, a yell of delight the clump off the googly-man which almost punched a hole through one of the revolving figures on the score-board. As fast as he could Mortimer was forcing the game, taking risks which were "altogether unjustifiable," so the long-faced critics said, but making the next-man-in wish he were out there with him, dancing along that strip of sunlit stage to the tune of Mortimer's bat. Next-man-in had been in a blue funk scarcely an hour before.

Mortimer glanced at the clock, then at the score-board, which told the world that No. 5 had made sixty-six. Wild hopes of a century came to him; he made a mental calculation and an on-drive to the pavilion steps. Seventy—running it too close to wait for the hundred. Hang it! that was a good ball; no hope of hitting it for a single. Over, and Yorkshire's best had got the bowling. He had promised eighty, but what fun to get a hundred! Might have been, too, if he could have had one more over from the googly chap. The Yorkshireman got the ball away to leg, and Mortimer was running down the pitch; he turned for the easy second run, saw the outstretched, self-denying hand of his partner, and was almost tempted. A century—wouldn't Cynthia just love it! A few fours, a six, perhaps—— But the run was easy, and the other man's. "*Come!*" he called, and the dream was dead. A few minutes later Mortimer's innings was complete for history. A shot for three had twisted his score-roll round to eighty-one, and he faced the bowler for the last time. Down came the ball, the merest trifle wide of the off-stump. Mortimer knew where cover-point was, knew the pace at which his tireless wrists would slam the ball knee-high to the fieldsman. He struck: cover jumped scarcely a foot, wrapped both hands about the ball, flung it high into the air.

A wonderful catch, they called it in the papers. Nobody called it a wonderful stroke. Yet for artistry it appealed more to Mortimer than any other in his innings.

VERY few of the big racing crowd at Hurst Park that sunny Saturday afternoon were keenly interested in the sale of that very indifferent animal, Romping Home. Scarcely more than a score of the patrons of Tattersall's watched the horse as it was led round and round the tiny sale ring, while the auctioneer tried to flog the bidding into something approaching liveliness.

"A good horse, this, gentlemen. A likely winner. Nicely weighted in the Leiston Handicap to-day. One hundred guineas, did you say, sir? Am selling this horse with or without engagement, and without reserve. Very useful animal; bound to win a good race. Who'll say a hundred and ten? Romping Home—sure to justify its name, gentlemen. A hundred guineas is all I'm bid. Worth double! A hundred guineas is all I'm bid." The worthy gentleman, a little disheartened by the lack of response, began almost mechanically to utter the same mild eulogies again. He droned along conscientiously; somebody yawned, and his audience dwindled. The future ownership of Romping Home was nothing to get excited about.

At the right-hand side of the auctioneer's little box there quietly appeared a tall figure in white flannels partially concealed by a light overcoat. He watched for a few moments with steady eyes the calm parade of Romping Home, apparently studying the horse's points.

"One hundred guineas is all I'm offered. I shall have to knock this down at one hundred guineas if——"

"A hundred and fifty!"

The auctioneer woke up; his eloquence had evidently borne fruit.

"Sixty!"

"Eighty!" quietly from Mortimer, and glancing across the tiny enclosure he had the satisfaction of seeing his rival swear. But he went to two hundred, and Mortimer, to show he really meant business, clapped on a further fifty. The man who had nearly

secured Romping Home for a hundred guineas made a frantic effort to size Mortimer up. Would it be better to back out of the duel and try to treat privately afterwards? He *thought* Mortimer looked a reasonable sort of a chap, but he couldn't be sure. He ventured another twenty guineas while he was making up his mind, but Mortimer's "Three hundred!" finished him. Ere the auctioneer had quite completed his little ritual, Mortimer, feeling a touch on his sleeve, turned to see the disappointed bidder beside him.

"Congratulations!" said the stranger. "It's a stiff price, but I think he's worth it. You'll be winning the Leiston Handicap with him within an hour."

"I'll be *not!*"

"Let me assure you it's a real good thing for your horse. I wanted to buy him specially on account of his prospects in this engagement. I tell you what I'll do. I'll give you a hundred to stand in as part-owner till to-morrow. If he wins we share stake-money, of course."

"Go to blazes, Carrington! You *are* Carrington, aren't you? Romping Home does not run to-day. I've taken any amount of trouble, any amount of risk, to ensure being here this afternoon to buy it so that it doesn't run. You want it to run to *lose*, not win. Your little scheme's a washout."

A man who lives by his wits knows how to keep his temper, and insults worry him little. Carrington merely laughed, a little strainedly.

"So you think you're helping young Neville Acton out of a mess, do you? You're mad, sir; you're taking away his only chance of getting quits with me. He took a price about Romping Home—I laid him six thousand to two—and if it doesn't run he loses. You'd better give him a chance to win."

"Not much," smiled Mortimer. "It was shortly after midnight at the Horseshoe Club you made the wager. Bets made on the day of a race are void if the horse doesn't run. You know very well that Romping Home couldn't win if they gave it a furlong start. But it doesn't run, so there's no bet. Good afternoon."

The next minute Mortimer was climbing again into Lady Cynthia's car. "You needn't hurry *quite* so much, Weston, on the journey home," he said to the chauffeur.

CYNTHIA'S dark eyes were not innocent of tears. It was rather sweet here in the evening silence, altogether peaceful and a little wonderful after the big happenings of the day. Even the steady tones of Mortimer's voice as he fulfilled his promise to explain scarcely seemed to disturb the quiet. As he finished, Cynthia's hand fell gently on his, in a silent expression of complete comprehension.

"Neville has told me a lot more than that," she whispered. "He has told the dad everything. It's bad, but it would have been far worse. Don't think that we are not grateful."

"Everybody plays the fool at times; you mustn't blame the boy too much. Anybody who falls in with the Carrington gang is likely to get in too deep. The story Neville told me last night would have made any fellow do all he could to help him. He was in almost to his neck, and Carrington had tricked him into a further bet which would have drowned him. I saw the one certain way out, and I had to do it."

"You were pretty quick?"

"I had to be. Ten minutes after Neville left me I worked out the drastic illness plot. I hadn't much time to think of alternatives. Wragg rang up the Nursing Home and the *Daily Wire*, and I was neck deep in the scheme. The nurse had come almost before I had time to instruct Wragg to send out in the morning S.O.S. calls to Reggie Cheape and one or two others. They all failed me, every one, the scugs! So I had to keep on with the job myself; you can't send a District Messenger boy to buy a gee-gee for you. 'Tisn't as though I'm a racing head, with agents and trainers at my call. I didn't even know what to do with the jolly old gee when I'd bought him; it cost me a fiver to keep the kindly interest of the boy who was leading him about. Anyhow, everything's all right now, and I'll bowl like blazes on Monday."

"Why didn't you tell me this morning?"

"I couldn't; it was Neville's secret, not mine. For all I knew my plan might not have worked out. And you wouldn't have let me gone, either; somehow or another you'd have stopped me from quitting the cricket for Neville's sake. I *had* to stand down from the match; *had* to keep quiet the real reason and put up a sham illness. If England had lost the toss I wouldn't have played, not even for you, Cynthia. I should have been fielding the whole day long; it would have been absolutely impossible to get away. I couldn't risk that. Your brother is a bit more important than a cricket match."

"Anybody's brother?"

"Perhaps. I don't know; really, I don't know. *Your* brother, anyhow." He drew a little closer to her, his arm creeping along the back of her chair. "'With or without engagement,'" he quoted, and drawing her to him kissed lips that were more than ready. "*That* is without engagement——"

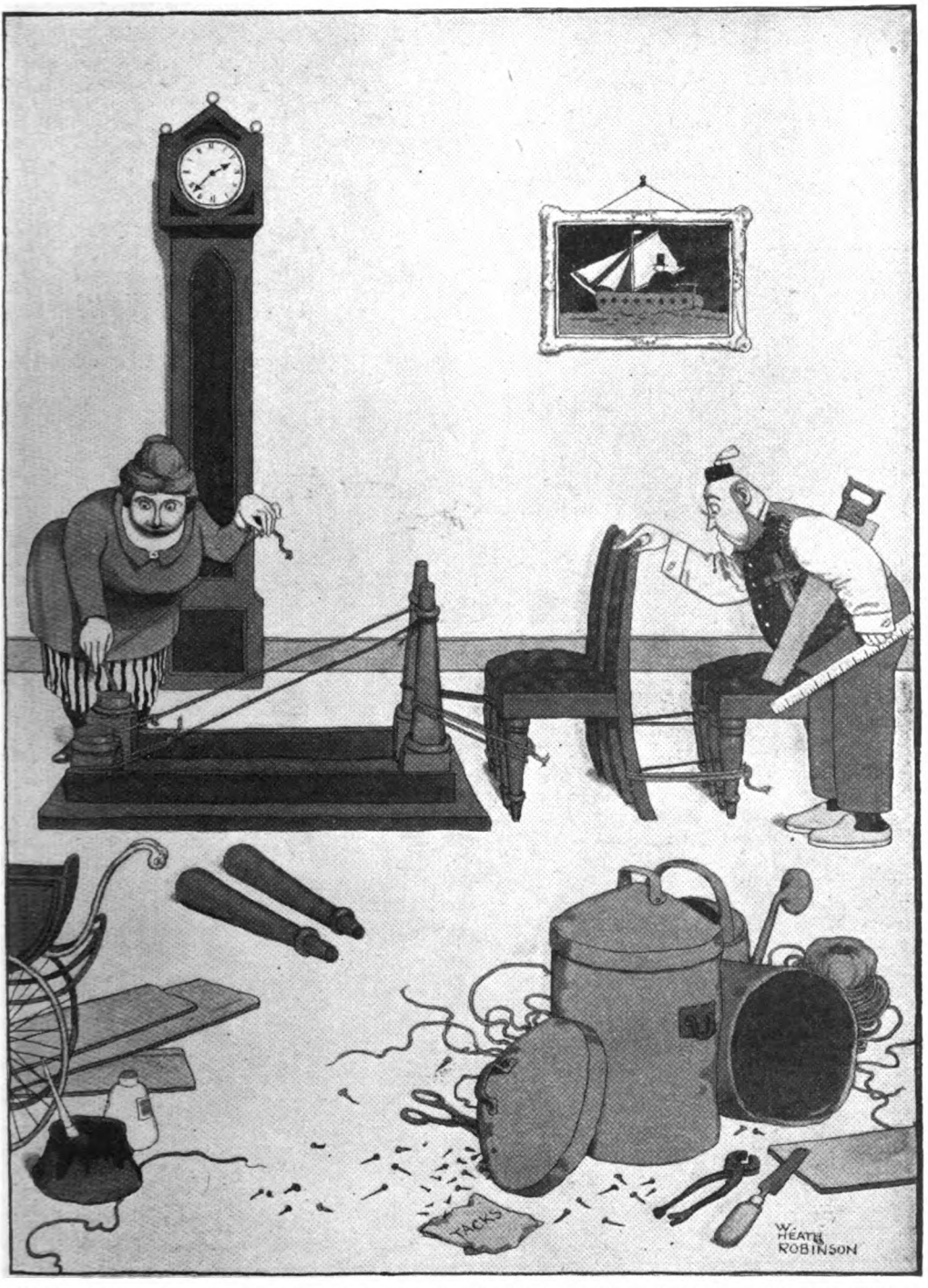
"And this," she said, making with her hands a soft prison for his face, "is *with!*"

The Home-Made Car

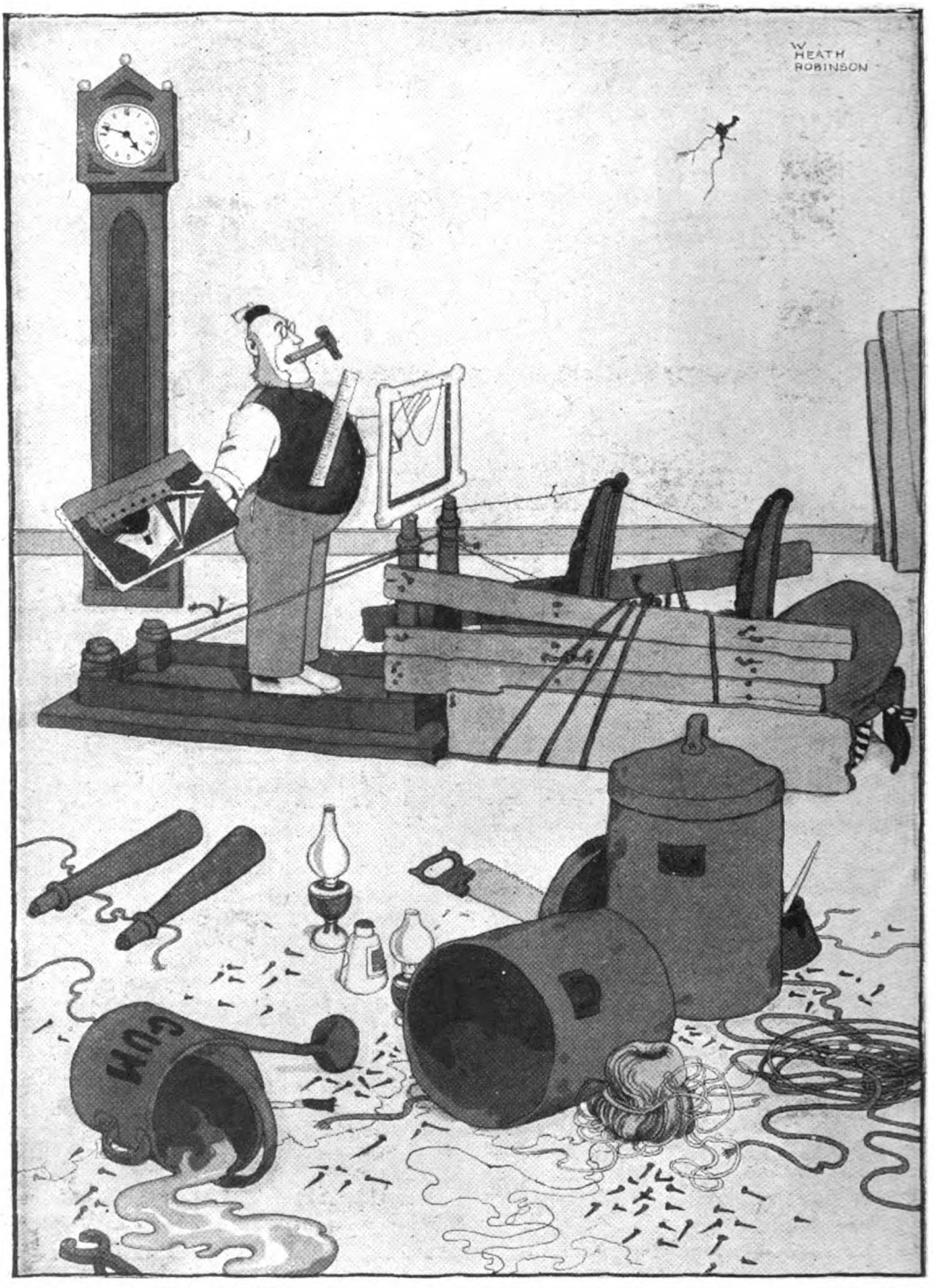
By

W. HEATH ROBINSON

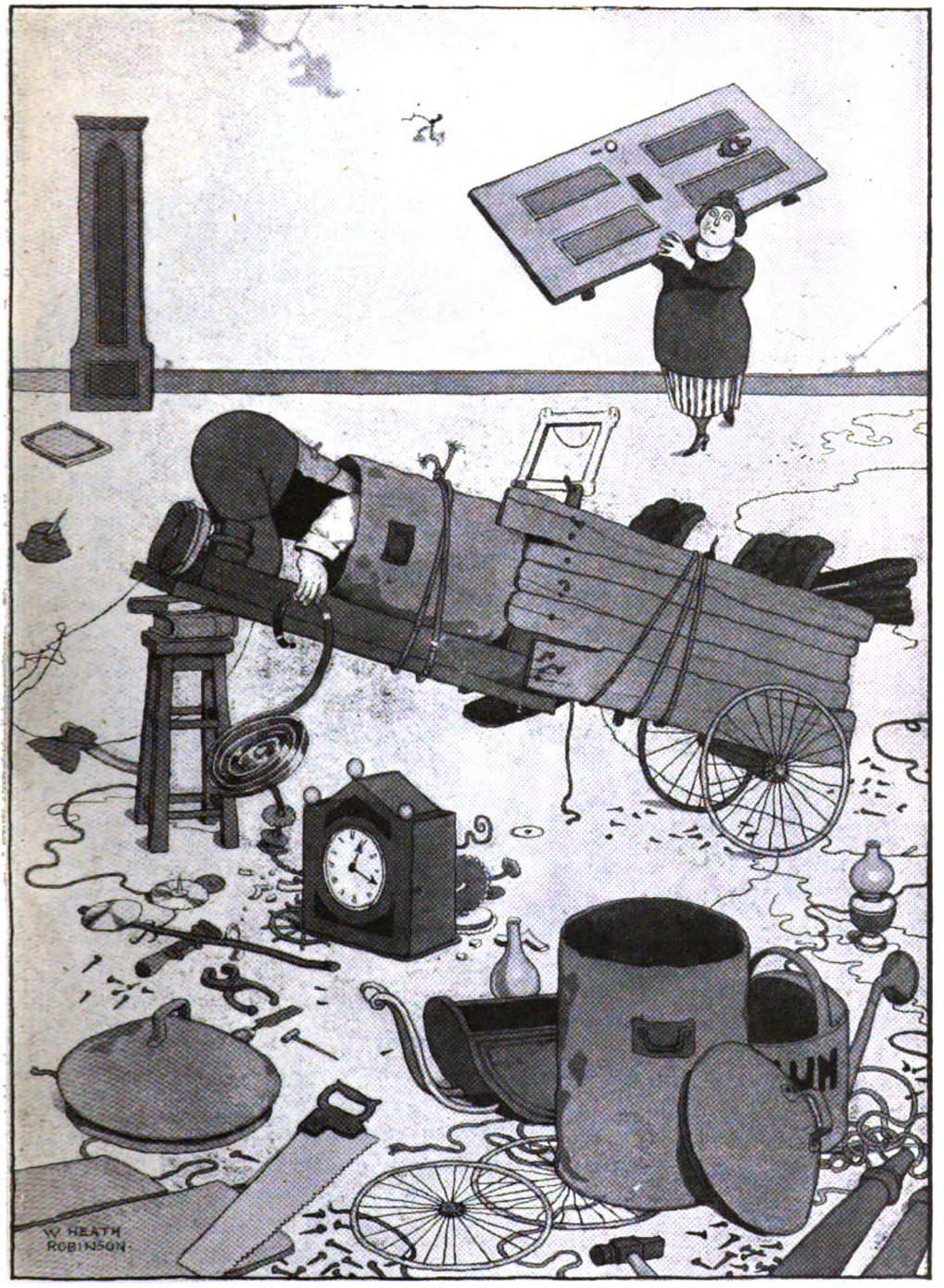
DEAR LABOUR AND THE HIGH PRICE OF ALL RAW MATERIAL MAKE IT ESSENTIAL THAT WE SHOULD PRACTISE ECONOMY AND AVOID WASTE OF EVERY KIND. ACCORDINGLY, IN THESE PAGES I HAVE ENDEAVOURED TO SHOW HOW A MOTOR-CAR MAY BE MANUFACTURED OUT OF SUCH OLD JUNK AS IS TO BE FOUND IN EVERY HOUSEHOLD.



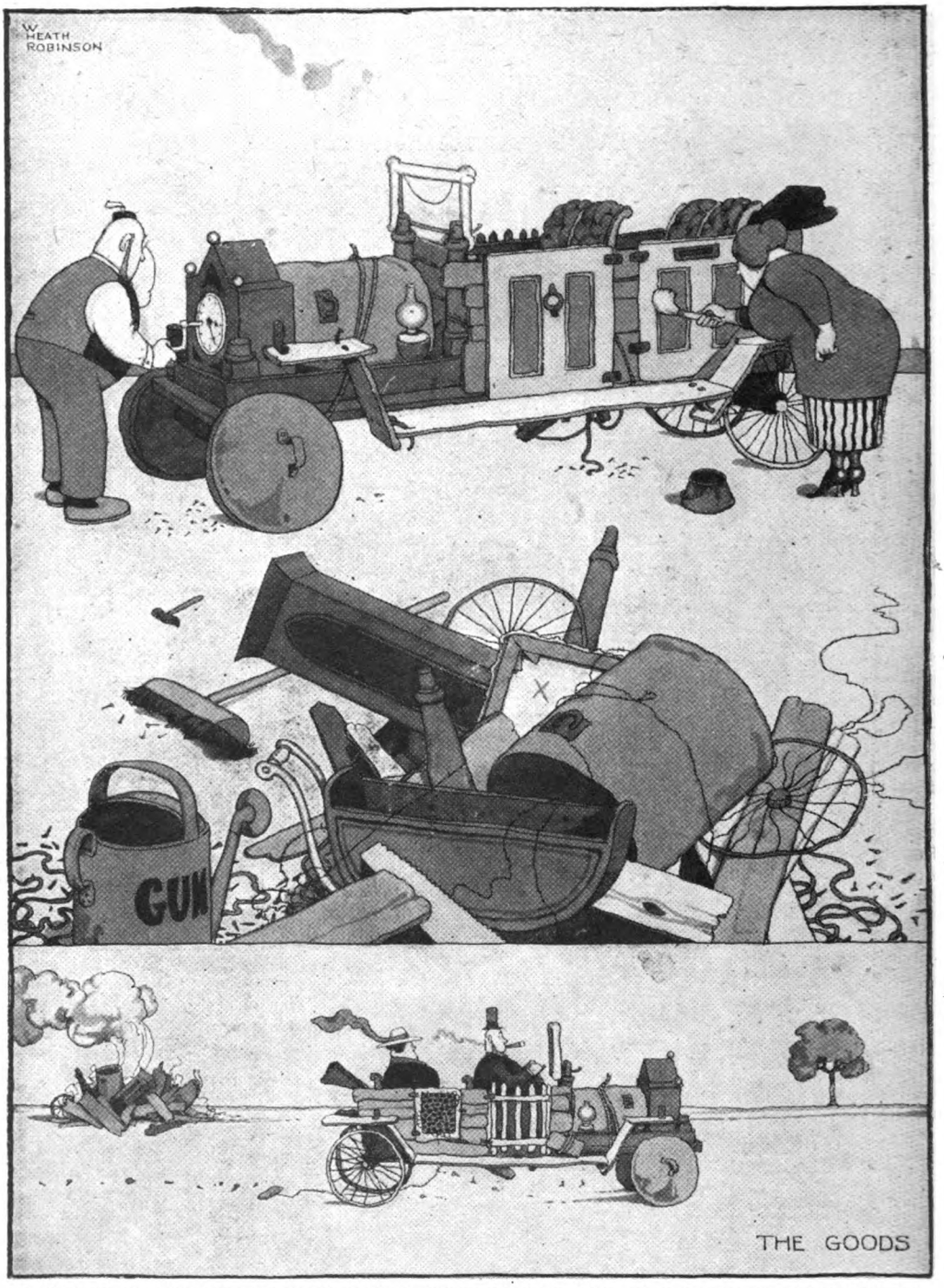
START WITH THE DINING-ROOM TABLE. HAVING DECIDED WHICH END SHALL FORM THE FRONT OF THE CAR, SAW OFF THE TWO LEGS AT THAT END, IN THE MANNER INDICATED. CHAIRS MUST THEN BE PLACED IN POSITION AND SECURED WITH A DISUSED CLOTHES-LINE.



STRENGTH SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE BODY BY A FEW SHELVES AND FLOOR-BOARDS. ALSO, GET THE WIND-SCREEN INTO POSITION. ANY PICTURE WHICH HAS LONG BEEN A SOURCE OF IRRITATION CAN BE USED FOR THIS. THE PICTURE SHOULD BE REMOVED BUT THE GLASS LEFT INTACT IN THE FRAME, WHICH IS THEN NAILED IN POSITION, AS SHOWN.



SHOULD YOU BE THE POSSESSOR OF A GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK, THE PROBLEM OF MOTIVE-POWER IS EASILY SOLVED. CLOCKWORK IS MUCH CHEAPER AND CLEANER THAN PETROL. AS FOR A BONNET—WELL, AN OLD DUSTBIN WILL DO. A DISCARDED PERAMBULATOR COMES IN USEFUL, TOO, AT THIS STAGE, FOR WHEELS AND HOOD; WHILE THE FRONT DOOR OF THE HOUSE IS READILY CONVERTED INTO DOORS.



A COUPLE OF DUSTBIN LIDS MAKE CAPITAL FRONT WHEELS, AND THESE CAN EASILY BE SOLDERED ON TO A SPARE STAIR ROD, WHICH MAKES A MOST RELIABLE AXLE. WITH A FEW SUGAR BOXES, KNOCK UP A COMBINATION OF RUNNING-BOARD AND MUD-GUARDS, AND, LASTLY, ADJUST THE TOP PORTION OF YOUR GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK IN POSITION, WIND UP THE WORKS, AND, AS YOU BOWL MERRILY ALONG, REFLECT PROUDLY THAT BY YOUR SOLE UNAIDED EFFORT YOU HAVE "DELIVERED THE GOODS."

MR. CRAY'S ADVENTURES

No. X.—Mr. CRAY RETURNS HOME

by

E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

ILLUSTRATED BY S. ABBEY

MR. CRAY leaned back in his deck-chair and watched the last blur of land fade away into the mist. He was not in a cheerful frame of mind. Behind him lay the world of adventures, London with its juggernaut of life, its complex colours, its mystery, its everlasting call. There was his year, too, of grim self-sacrifice upon the battlefields of France, the year of his life given splendidly and cheerfully, a fine and wholesome tonic, the stimulus of which still remained. Behind, too, lay that land of pleasure only lately left, the Riviera, with its sensuous joys, its flowers and its perfumes, its Ninettes, its bland incarnation of the whole philosophy of joy. And before him lay a new America, an America which somehow or other he dreaded. Mr. Cray was neither a greedy man nor a drunkard, but he felt a sad conviction that much of that glad spirit of comradeship and good-fellowship must have passed away, withered in the blight of this strange new legislation. It was an unfamiliar land to which he returned, an unwelcome call which he had grudgingly obeyed. The Cray Plant, glutted with dollars made by the manufacture of munitions, required his help in its reorganization. It needed the brains of its founder to open up new avenues of industry. So Mr. Cray was on his way home.

It was the pleasantest month of the year for crossing—the end of May—when the sun was warm but never blistering, when the green seas tossed and murmured before the west wind, which sang him to sleep at night and brought the fresh colour to his cheeks in the early morning. The bar-tender was an old friend of his, there were plenty of acquaintances on board, his place at the Captain's table was flattering. Yet Mr. Cray was melancholy because the sun sank in the wrong place and the bows of the steamer were pointed in the wrong direction.

It was on the second afternoon out when Mr. Cray, turning carelessly enough to glance at the installation of a fellow-passenger in the steamer chair by his side, received a distinct shock, a shock which was apparently shared by the fellow-passenger in question. She stared at Mr. Cray and Mr. Cray stared at her. The words which finally escaped from his lips seemed inadequate.

"Say, this is some surprise! I had no idea that you were thinking of making this trip."

The slim woman with the brilliant eyes showed distinct signs of embarrassment. She tried to carry off the awkwardness of the meeting with a nervous little laugh.

"We made up our minds quite suddenly," she said, "or rather I suppose I ought to say that our minds were made up for us."

"Major Hartopp is on board, then?" Mr. Cray inquired.

She nodded.

"He is over there, leaning against the rail, talking to the dark, clean-shaven man."

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Mr. Cray glanced in the direction indicated and nodded.

"Well, well," he said, "this seems kind of familiar. I had an idea, though, that you two had had enough of the States for a time. Why, it was only three days before I sailed that your husband told me he never intended to return."

She smiled sadly. Her eyes seemed to be watching the glittering spray which leaped every now and then into the sunshine.

"Our journey was undertaken at a moment's notice," she confided. "Here comes Guy. He will be glad to see you."

If such was the case, Major Hartopp certainly managed to conceal his gratification. He received his erstwhile acquaintance's cordial greeting with marked diffidence. Mr. Cray's good-nature, however, was not to be denied. He insisted upon an introduction to their friend—a Mr. Harding, of New York—and did his best to dissipate the distinct atmosphere of embarrassment which he could scarcely fail to notice. He was only partially successful, however, and presently, when Hartopp and his companion had strolled away, he drew his chair a little closer to Mina's.

"Mrs. Hartopp," he said, "your husband and you and I have come up against one another pretty often during the last three months. It seemed to me that we parted in Monte Carlo pretty good friends. What's wrong with your good man, and you, too, for the matter of that?"

Mrs. Hartopp turned her sorrowful eyes upon her companion.

"Mr. Cray," she sighed, "you are one of those men who find out everything. I really don't see that it is of any use trying to keep it secret from you. Guy and I are in a very strange position. You can't imagine what has happened, I suppose?"

"I cannot," Mr. Cray acknowledged. "You've got me fairly guessing."

She looked around as though to be sure that no one was within hearing. Then she leaned towards her companion.

"Mr. Cray," she whispered, "that man—that horrible man, Harding—is no friend of ours. He is an American detective taking us back to New York. We are under arrest."

"You don't say!" Mr. Cray gasped.

"Guy never thought that they would apply for an extradition warrant," she went on. "They did it quite secretly. We were arrested the moment we got back to London."

"Pretty tough," Mr. Cray murmured. "Of course, I always understood," he ventured, a little dubiously, "that there had been some trouble in New York, but I didn't think it was anything they could get him back for, unless he chose to go."

"The only trouble there," Mina declared, "was that he got into a set of people who were bent on making money anyhow, and he was too clever for them. However, I will not weary you any more by talking of our misfortunes. You had better take no notice of us. The truth might leak out, and it would not be pleasant for you to be associated with criminals."

"You can cut that out," Mr. Cray declared, warmly. "If there's anything I can do during the voyage, count on me."

Mina furtively dabbed her beautiful eyes with her handkerchief.

"You are very kind," she sobbed, "but nothing can help us now. Our pictures will be in all the p–papers. Guy will be branded as an adventurer and I as a fraud. You had better take no more notice of us, Mr. Cray. We are not worth it."

MR. CRAY gave a great deal of thought during the next few hours to the matter of the Hartopps' predicament. So far, no one seemed to have surmised the truth of the situation, although the man Harding was never for a moment apart from one or the other of them, and the fact that he was a person of obviously inferior social station made the close intimacy a little remarkable. Towards the close of the second day Mr. Cray deliberately sought Harding out during the half-hour before dinner when he was generally alone. Harding, who did not dress for that meal, was lounging on the promenade deck, and Mr. Cray drew him insidiously towards the smoking-room.

"No cocktails for me," the detective pronounced. "I've had some. I'll take a drop of Scotch whisky with you, though."

They took several drops. The smoke-room was empty, and Mr. Cray very cautiously approached the subject he wished to discuss.

"See here, Harding," he inquired, "is this a serious job for Hartopp?"

Harding became taciturn.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he declared, cautiously.

"You needn't worry about me," Mr. Cray declared. "I'm in the secret. Mrs. Hartopp told me all about it."

Harding chewed his cigar for a moment and sipped his whisky and soda.

"I guess he'll get five years, perhaps more. She'll probably get a spell herself."

"I'm sorry to hear this," Mr. Cray said. "They're friends of mine."

"That don't alter their being crooks," the other replied, dryly.

"Does New York know that you've got them?"

"Not a word. They didn't believe I'd get the warrant through."

"'Mr. Cray,' she whispered, 'that horrible man Harding is no friend of ours. He is an American detective taking us back to New York. We are under arrest.'"

"They don't know that you're on this steamer, then?"

"Nary a one of them. I'm going to give them the big surprise."

"What's the charge?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"Against him—selling dud bonds. Against her—robbing the old ladies of Brooklyn by pretending she brought spooks to them. They've done some slick things between them, but they're booked for Sing-Sing this time, or my name ain't Silas Harding. Not a drop more, Mr. Cray. I'll be getting a wash before dinner."

Mr. Cray walked the deck moodily. He was a kind-hearted man, and the plight of his companions distressed him greatly. After dinner that evening, whilst Harding was playing poker in the smoking-room, he sat between husband and wife.

"I guess there's nothing to be done about this matter with Harding, eh?" he queried.

Mina's eyes became suddenly bright.

"You're so wonderful, Mr. Cray," she murmured. "I'm sure you have something at the back of your mind."

"Nothing that amounts to anything, I'm afraid," Cray acknowledged. "Harding tells me, though, that he hasn't communicated with New York in any way."

Hartopp looked up eagerly.

"He told us that; I wondered at the time whether he was trying to make an opening for a little negotiation. The trouble of it is that we haven't the stuff handy."

"What about your wife's legacy?"

"They paid five thousand pounds down," Hartopp groaned, "and left the rest in case the relatives disputed the will. If this matter comes out in New York, and Mina's name is mentioned, we shall never see that forty-five thousand pounds. It's the devil's own luck."

"It doesn't seem hopeful," Mr. Cray admitted, "but we've had some fun together, and if I can make Harding see reason, I'll talk business to him."

Mina's eyes shone and her soft fingers clasped his hand. Mr. Cray reciprocated her pressure gently. A little later in the day he approached Harding.

"See here, Harding," he began, "how is it you and your friends the Hartopps are not down in the passenger list?"

The detective produced a particularly black and objectionable-looking cigar, lit it, and stuck it into the corner of his mouth.

"You seem mighty interested in the Hartopps," he observed.

"In a kinder way I am," Mr. Cray admitted. "They're the sort of wrongdoers I've a fancy for. They're sports through and through, and another thing, they're clever."

"Well, between you and me," the detective confided, "I've a sort of sneaking sympathy for them myself, and the reason they're entered on the ship's list as Mr. and Mrs. Brown, and I figure as one Perkins from Chicago, is that I didn't want it to get about all over the ship that they were a couple of criminals whom I was taking back to New York."

"I see," Mr. Cray murmured; "very considerate."

IT was about an hour after dinner-time and a dark evening. The deck, however, was still crowded with promenaders. Mr. Cray inveigled his companion into a more retired spot.

"See here, Harding," he continued, "I'm a plain man and I want to ask you a plain question. Had you heard of Mrs. Hartopp's legacy when you started out on this trip?"

The detective rolled his cigar round, pinched it, and expectorated.

"I sure had," he admitted. "How do you figure that comes in?"

"Just in this way," Mr. Cray explained. "You found your warrant granted a little unexpectedly, and you found the Hartopps amenable to reason. You've got them on board here without any fuss, and I take it there isn't a soul on the other side who knows that you're bringing 'em along. In fact, you've fixed it so that if you were to turn up in New York empty-handed, no one would be disappointed or surprised."

"Well?"

"Now let me ask you as man to man," Mr. Cray went on, "didn't it enter into your head that a little deal with the Hartopps might be made, some little arrangement by which they could mingle with the other passengers and slip away at New York, and you could make a little deposit at your bank against a rainy day? How's that, Mr. Harding?"

"I get you," the latter said, calmly. "You're suggesting that I might be bribed to let them go."

"See here, Harding," Mr. Cray argued in his most persuasive tone; "I figured the matter out this way to myself. Harding's a man of, say, forty-five to forty-six years of age, he draws a salary that don't permit of much saving, and when they retire him, in a few years' time, the pension isn't going to keep him in luxury. I take it that it's a man's business as he walks along through life to try and put a bit by when he sees a chance. Here's just one of these chances. The Hartopps ain't criminals at all. They're just easy-living, pleasant adventurer and adventuress, who live by their wits and other people's folly. I haven't got a grouch on 'em, although they nearly cost me a cool thousand. They're not malicious; they're not out to do anyone any particular harm in

the world. Are you travelling along with me, Harding ? "

" Sure ! " was the terse reply.

" Therefore, I say that there's your chance," Mr. Cray wound up.

The detective considered for some minutes.

" Supposing I was willing to talk business," he said, " what would be the price ? "

" Two thousand pounds," Mr. Cray pronounced.

" Nothing doing."

" Name your own figure, then."

" It'll cost you five," Harding declared, firmly, " not a cent more or less. We'll call it twenty-five thousand dollars."

Mr. Cray sighed.

" It's a lot of money," he declared.

" It's a big risk," was the terse reply.

" How long can you give me to think it over ? "

" Twenty-four hours."

" I'll meet you here at this time to-morrow night," Mr. Cray promised.

MINA was looking very wan and delicate the next day. Her soft, luminous eyes called Mr. Cray to her side as soon as he appeared on deck. She questioned him eagerly.

" Is there any chance, do you think ? "

" The man can be bought," Mr. Cray replied. " The trouble is that he wants a great deal of money."

" How much ? "

" Five thousand pounds."

Her face fell.

" It is terrible, that ! " she murmured.

" Have you anything at all towards it ? " Mr. Cray asked, bluntly.

" You had better ask Guy," she answered. " I never know exactly how we stand, financially. Of course, if only the legacy had been paid we should have been all right."

" Supposing the money was found, have you any place in New York you could get to quickly and lie hidden until you catch a steamer home ? "

" We have a certain hiding-place," she assured him. " There would be no difficulty about that. There is Guy over there. Will you go and talk to him ? "

Mr. Cray obeyed orders. Major Hartopp took a gloomy view of the situation.

" Harding didn't give us a moment to look around," he explained. " We had barely twenty-four hours' notice before he marched us on this infernal steamer. All the money Mina and I have between us is about ninety pounds in cash, and about a hundred and forty at a bank in London. What's so infernally annoying is," he went on, " they'll never pay over the rest of the legacy if this gets into the papers. They haven't a chance of holding Mina for anything she's done—she's been too clever for that—but the exposure will be quite sufficient. Those Scotch lawyers will fight the case inch by inch sooner than pay over a shilling, if Mina's integrity is once questioned."

" Supposing the money was forthcoming," Mr. Cray said, " your wife says she knows where you could find shelter in New York for a few days."

" Not only that," Hartopp declared, eagerly, " but I could get a passage back on this ship without any questions asked. The purser's a very decent fellow, and I've been having a talk to him about it."

Mr. Cray went back to Mina. She looked at him with very pretty hesitation.

" Does Guy think we could do anything ? " she asked.

" The state of your exchequer, unfortunately, seems to place that out of the question," he told her.

She leaned forward. Her hand rested upon his, and the pressure of her fingers became more marked. There was something about the haunting way she looked at him which reminded Mr. Cray of the first time he had seen her at the Albert Hall.

" Dear friend," she whispered, " I am very fond of Guy, in his way. He is a dear, of course, but—I am fonder still of liberty. The charge against me is really a foolish one. The only trouble is that it may spoil my chance of getting that legacy. Couldn't you pay him a little less and get him to leave me out ? You could take me back to England with you, and I should be there when Guy's trouble was over."

Mr. Cray, being only human, returned the pressure of her fingers, but he shook his head.

" I guess I'll see you both through this," he promised. " It won't ruin me, any way."

MR. CRAY was met on the dock by Mr. Nathaniel Long, the treasurer of his company, and hurried away into a private room of one of the mammoth hotels. There, with great pride, the latter drew from a small bag a bottle of Scotch whisky. Tumblers and soda-water were speedily forthcoming. Mr. Cray asked the obvious questions concerning this great change which had come to his native land.

" I tell you, Joseph," Mr. Long said, sorrowfully, " it's just as though some silent blight had fallen upon the country. The clubs aren't worth going into. Everybody snaps and snarls and quarrels at the least opportunity. The dinner-parties at the restaurants seem frost-bitten, and it's one of the most painful sights in New York to see

Charlie serving out temperance drinks behind the bar of the Waldorf."

"Any decrease in crime?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"Slightly worse, and more suicides. Besides, this drinking in corners is making us seem like a furtive nation. A drink that used to be a mark of good-fellowship is now a vice. The doctors have never had so many cases of indigestion, and there's a wave of melancholia going around. I tell you," Long went on, gazing affectionately at the contents of his tumbler, "it seems a small thing to be driven from one's native land for, but the day I get across to England, sit down in a restaurant, order my cocktail and my bottle of champagne—well, it will be great, that's all there is to it."

"How's business?" Mr. Cray inquired.

"That's what's brought me here," the other replied. "Joseph, the Seattle Power Works have offered to buy us out as we stand, before we start reconstruction, with five million dollars for goodwill and a premium on the stock. I've brought all the figures, and I've got a seat on the Limited to-night. My idea was that you might go right back with me, talk it over on the way, and go into things down there. It's a big chance if you've any fancy for cleaning up."

"It sounds great," Mr. Cray murmured. "Say, Nat, I've given an open cheque for twenty-five thousand dollars on the Merchants' Bank here—lost it at poker on the way over. I guess it's all right, eh?"

"Sure!" was the prompt reply. "We've never less than a hundred thousand dollars there. Did you get amongst pikers, or were you pushing some?"

"I guess the game was all right," Mr. Cray declared. "What time does the Limited start?"

"Seven o'clock."

"I'll look after my baggage and meet you at the depot," Mr. Cray promised.

IT was exactly ten days later when Mr. Cray, accompanied again by Mr. Nathaniel Long, returned to New York. They spent a solemn but inspiring day at the lawyer's and banker's. When the whole thing was over, Mr. Cray was a richer man than he ever had been in his life. His programme for the evening, although sadly affected, alas! by circumstances, still showed a sense of celebration. After a wonderful Turkish bath, a visit to the barber's and the manicurist, a whisky and soda in his room—an act of debauchery which was entirely flavourless—he met his friend and late business partner, and the two men made their way to the most select restaurant in New York, where a table had been reserved for them. With elaborate care, Mr. Cray wrote out a wonderful menu, ordered with a prodigious sigh a large bottle of mineral water, and, closing his eyes for a moment, drank an imaginary cocktail.

"Joseph, my boy, what are you going to do about it?" Nathaniel Long inquired. "You're in the prime of life and a very rich man. You can acquire a post in one of our great commercial undertakings over here, or you can wander out into the world as you have done during the last few years, looking for adventures. Mrs. Cray don t seem to make any particular claim upon you, especially since this anti-tobacco league was started. You're a free man, Joseph. That's what you are."

"And you?" Mr. Cray asked. "What about you, Nathaniel?"

Nathaniel Long shook his wizened little head.

"I guess that sort of thing doesn't exist for me," he replied, sorrowfully. "I have a wife and eight children. I am trustee of the chapel where my wife worships, secretary of our golf and country club, commodore of the sailing club. I shall just rent a slightly larger country house and take my ease. It is fortunate that I have not your restless spirit."

Mr. Cray was suddenly transfixed. He sat watching with sheer amazement a little party of three who were taking their places at an adjoining table—Major Hartopp, in his unmistakable English clothes, spruce and debonair; Mina, looking ravishing in a wonderful gown of filmy grey; and Mr. Harding, only a somewhat transformed Mr. Harding, in the long dinner-coat and flowing tie affected by the American diner-out. The head waiter himself saw them to their places, an obsequious *maître d'hôtel* passed on their order to attentive myrmidons. Nathaniel Long followed his friend's earnest gaze with some interest.

"Joseph," he inquired, "do you know the man in the dinner-coat—not the Englishman? You seem to be staring at him hard enough."

"He was on the steamer with me," Mr. Cray acknowledged.

"That fellow's seen the inside of Sing-Sing more than once," Mr. Long declared. "Some crook he is, I can tell you. I don't know what name he goes by now, but they used to call him Slick Jimmy. He seems to have got in with a swell crowd."

"He's never been a detective, by any chance, I suppose?" Mr. Cray asked.

Nathaniel Long smiled.

"I should say not," he replied. "I don't think, even on the principle of 'set a thief to catch a thief,' they'd stand Slick Jimmy in the force."

At that moment Mina caught Mr. Cray's

"She leaned forward. Her hand rested upon his, and the pressure of her fingers became more marked."

eye and bowed in a somewhat constrained fashion. Hartopp nodded affably. Mr. Harding contented himself with a furtive grin. Mr. Cray drank a glass of water with great solemnity.

"Nathaniel," he declared, "I guess that taste for adventures is fizzling out. I've got to hire a dog and a guardian and live amongst the duds."

"Been stung?" Nathaniel Long inquired, kindly.

Mr. Cray met Mina's tantalizing eyes and looked away.

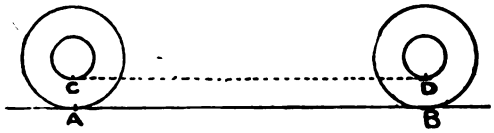
"Some," he groaned.

Mr. Oppenheim has just completed a series of detective stories of a new type, the first of which will shortly appear in "The Strand Magazine."

PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.

563.—A WHEEL FALLACY.

HERE is a simple little fallacy that I have found to be very perplexing to a great many people. The wheel shown in the illustration, in rolling from A



to B, makes one complete revolution. It is therefore obvious that the line A B is exactly equal in length to the circumference of the wheel. But the inner circle also makes one complete revolution along the imaginary dotted line C D, and, since the line C D is equal to the line A B, the circumferences of the larger and the smaller circles are exactly the same! This is certainly not true. Wherein lies the fallacy?

564.—A CHARADE.

MY *first* is a number, my *second* another,
And each, I assure you, will rhyme with the other.
My *first* you will find is one-fifth of my *second*,
And truly my *whole* a long period reckoned.
Yet my *first* and my *second* (nay, think not I cozen)
When added together will make but two dozen.

565.—BUYING BUNS.

BUNS were being sold at three prices: one a penny, two a penny, and three a penny. Some children (there were as many boys as girls) were given sevenpence to spend on these buns, each receiving exactly alike. How many buns did each receive? Of course no buns were divided.

566.—CURIOUS MULTIPLICATION.

I HAVE been asked to explain the following, which will doubtless interest many readers who have not seen it. If a person can add correctly but is incapable of multiplying or dividing by a number higher than 2, it is possible to obtain the product of any two numbers in this curious way. Multiply 97 by 23.

97	23
48	(46)
24	(92)
12	(184)
6	(368)
3	736
1	1,472
	2,231

In the first column we divide by 2, rejecting the remainders, until 1 is reached. In the second column we multiply 23 by 2 the same number of times. If we now strike out those products that are opposite to the even numbers in the first column (we have enclosed these in parentheses for convenience in printing) and add up the remaining numbers we get 2,231, which is the correct answer. Why is this?

SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES.

558.—RAILWAY ROUTES.

THERE are 2,501 ways of going, as follows:—

1-station journey	..	1 route	..	2 variations			2
2-station „	..	1 „	..	9	„		9
3-station „	..	2 routes	..	12	„		24
4-station „	..	5 „	..	18	„		90
5-station „	..	4 „	..	72	„		288
6-station „	..	14 „	..	36	„		504
8-station „	..	22 „	..	72	„		1,584
							2,501

We have only to consider the routes from B to D. The 1-station route is direct to D. The 2-station route is C D. The two 3-station routes are C B D and D C D. The five 4-station routes are D B C D, D C B D, C B C D, C D C D, and C D B D. Each of these routes is subject to a number of variations in the actual lines used, and for a journey of a given number of stations there is always the same number of variations, whatever the actual route. A 7-station journey is not possible.

559.—FOOTBALL RESULTS.

WE see at once from the table that England beat Ireland and drew with Wales. As E scored 2 goals to 0 in these games, they must have won 2—0 and drawn 0—0. This disposes of E and leaves three games, W *v.* I, S *v.* I, and S *v.* W, to be determined. Now, S had only one goal scored against them—by W or I. I scored only one goal, and that must have been against W or S. Assume it was against S. In that case W did not score against S. But W scored three goals altogether; therefore these must have been scored against I. We find I had 6 goals against them: 2 scored by E, as shown, 3 by W (if we assume that I scored *v.* S), and the remaining goal was scored by S. But, as we have just assumed I scored 1 goal against S, the match would have been drawn. It was won by S, and therefore I could not have scored against S. Thus the goal against S must have been scored by W. And as W scored 3 goals, the other two must have been *v.* I, who must have scored their only goal against W. Thus S beat W by 2—1 and I by 2—0, while W won by 2—1 *v.* I.

560.—THE MISSING VOWEL.

BY adding O's we get the sentence, ORTHODOX OXFORD DONS DON'T KNOW OLD PORT FROM LOGWOOD.

561.—ARMY FIGURES.

THE five brigades contained respectively 5,670, 6,615, 3,240, 2,730, and 2,772 men. Represent all the fractions with the common denominator 12,012, and the numerators will be 4,004, 3,432, 7,007, 8,316, and 8,190. Combining all the *different* factors contained in these numbers, we get 7,567,560, which, divided by each number in turn, gives us 1,890, 2,205, 1,080, 910, and 924. To fulfil the condition that the division contained a "little over 20,000 men," we multiply these by 3 and have the correct total—21,027.

562.—SOME ANAGRAMS.

1. ADMINISTRATION; 2. Calculate; 3. Instigate; 4. Panorama; 5. Destination; 6. Conglomerate; 7. Kleptomania; 8. Estimation; 9. Ornithological; 10. Malevolent.

553.—THE QUEEN AND THE CHAIR.

A LARGE number of correspondents have suggested what is undoubtedly the correct answer to this enigma: "I am notable; I am no table; I am not able."

You *can't* possibly get wet in the

42/- "Mattamac"

Feather-Weight Stormproof.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third, and is absolutely waterproof. Light and compact-folding, Wind and Chill proof as well as Wet proof, a "Mattamac" is the *Ideal* Coat for Holiday and going-away Wear. Get one now; you are sure to *need* it soon.

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits into the jacket pocket or Attaché Case.

42/-

For Lady or Gentleman. Also made for Officers and Rankers of Infantry and Cavalry.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The Coat worn by the 6ft. man beneath, when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

You can carry a "Mattamac" as easily as a newspaper or umbrella. You can even fold it to fit into your jacket pocket, or Attaché Case, when the Sun shines. Yet it gives complete protection in the worst weather—at less than half the cost, and one-third the weight, of ordinary Weathercoats.

Illustrations show Models Nos. 1 and 2, at **42/-**, in Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, or Blue Shades. Belted Models in the same range of colours, cost **47/6**.

You *can* pay twice the price and get a Coat which does not look so well.

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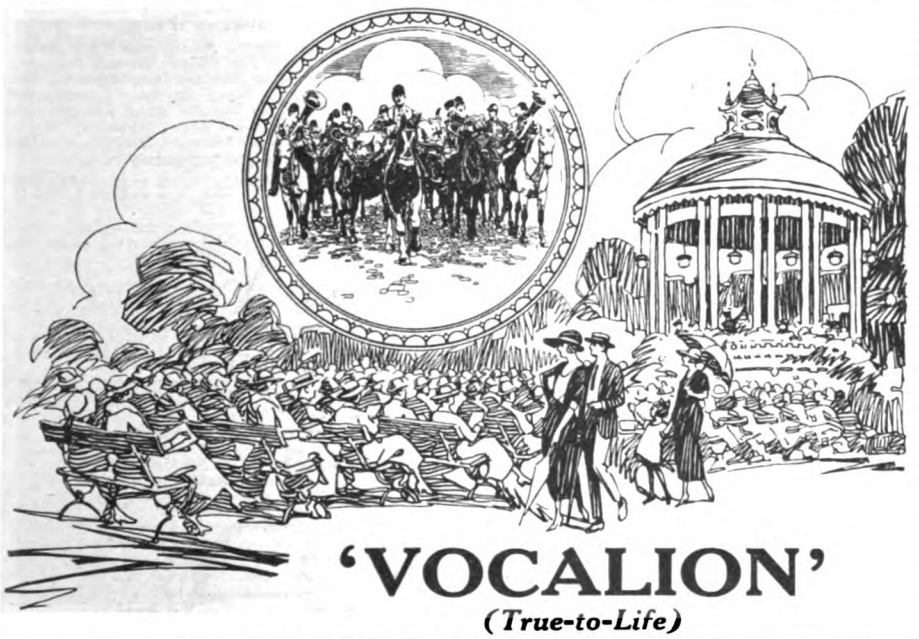

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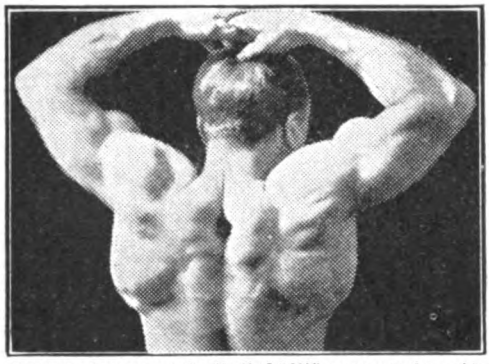

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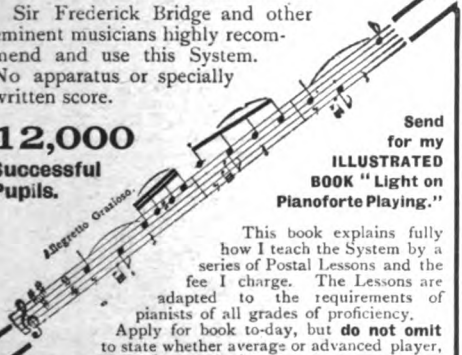

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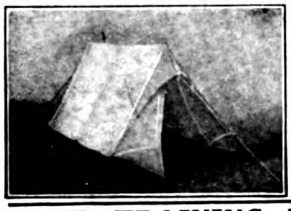

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IT PAYS TO BE TALL.

There are natural forces in every man or woman, which, properly assisted, can make him or her taller. **You can** add three, four, or even five inches to your present height. At the same time wonderfully improve your health. No apparatus required. Ordinary habits retained. Full details *free.* Send 2d. stamp for postage. Address:

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Mothers will find this unequalled for keeping the children's hair in a clean and healthy condition.

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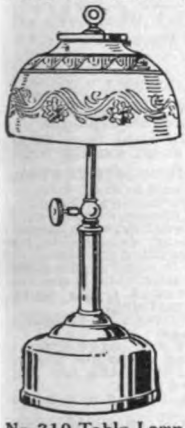
Established over 100 years.

2

400 C.P. Vapor Lamps that can be turned down to any desired smaller C.P.

Safety and satisfaction guaranteed. They burn 95% Air and 5% Petrol Vapor. They are clean and economical. They cost ½d. per hour to run, and at one filling will run a week. The principle in both lamps shown is that applied to a lamp supplied to the U.S.A. Government. Large stocks of both types are on our premises, and we can supply by return. The cost is 6os. each packed and delivered. The Mantles are durable, and the Lantern is storm proof. Everybody who introduces six buyers gets his money back. The lamps are made of the very best and strongest materials, and are finished in highly-polished nickel. The Light given is twenty times that of the largest oil lamps. Both Lamps are fitted with Automatic Tip Cleaner, and they are the Lamps that never fail. Every Lamp is tested before it reaches user's hands



No. 210 Table Lamp

Messrs. Stanleys (Stratford), Ltd. 25th February, 1921.

Gentlemen,—I must write and thank you for making evening hours in the country possible. We have no lighting here except oil lamps and candles. Your lamps for house and for yard and stable use have solved many problems, and I have not had one second's trouble with either. This is entirely due to your Patent Tip Cleaner, as is proved by the fact that a friend of mine who was persuaded to buy a lamp of the same type, but different make, is always in trouble with a clogged jet. On Wednesday last I took my Lantern (335) to a concert at Earlswood and fixed it up as a limelight to the great satisfaction of the organiser, artistes, and audience. You may make whatever use you like of this letter.

Yours truly, (Signed) GERALD O. S——.

Messrs. Stanleys, Limited. May 31st, 1921.

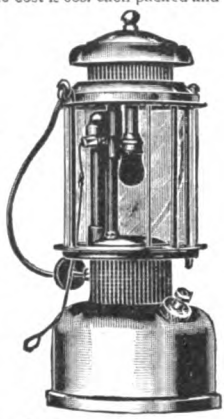
Dear Sirs,—Enclosed please find cheque £2 for one of your Vapor Irons as advertised in *Farmer and Stockbreeder*. I have had one of your Storm Proof Lanterns all winter, and I must say they are a great success. A better light nobody could wish for.

Yours faithfully, J—— B——.

Stanleys (Stratford), Ltd. 26/5/21.

Dear Sirs,—Enclosed P.O. Please send per return post half-dozen spare mantles for Table Lamp 210. I may state the lamp is being put to many uses, and is giving the utmost satisfaction. We have installed it in place of Gas for printing in a Moore Photographic Printing Machine.

Yours truly, J—— R——.



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The drink craze disappears, and is replaced by a more normal condition of appetite, nerves, etc. **The improvement in the health** of an ex-drinker is marvellous when he gives up alcohol. Men **drinking a bottle of whisky or more daily** are safely and effectively stopped. **No danger to health, but a steady improvement manifests itself from day to day.** There is no inclination for alcohol; the former drinker is surprised and delighted at the great change.

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I will send you my book in plain, sealed envelope promptly, post paid, on receipt of your request. I appeal especially to those who have wasted money on ineffective remedies. Correspondence strictly confidential. Address:

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Kruschen Salts

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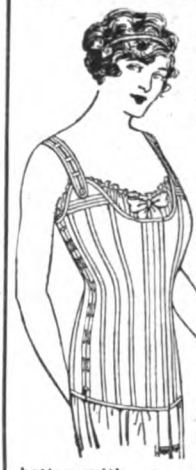

must wear "healthy" Corsets, and the "Natural Ease" Corset is the most healthy of all. Every wearer says so. While moulding the figure to the most delicate lines of feminine grace they vastly improve the health.

The CORSET of HEALTH

The Natural Ease Corset, Style 2.

9/11 pair. *Postage abroad extra.*

Complete with Special Detachable Suspenders.

Stocked in all sizes from 20 to 30. Made in finest quality Drill.

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No bones or steels to drag, hurt, or break. No lacing at the back. Made of strong, durable drill of finest quality, with special suspenders, detachable for washing purposes.

It is laced at the sides with elastic lacings to expand freely when breathing.

It is fitted with adjustable shoulder straps.

It has a short (9 in.) busk in front which ensures a perfect shape, and is fastened at the top and bottom with non-rusting Hooks and Eyes.

It can be easily washed at home, having nothing to rust or tarnish.

"The History of the Health Corset may be set out in a few lines—it is founded on Science, improved by Experience, and beautified by Art; its perfection is the result of the co-operation of the Artist and the Expert."

These Corsets are specially recommended for ladies who enjoy cycling, tennis, dancing, golf, &c., as there is nothing to hurt or break. Singers, Actresses and Invalids will find wonderful assistance, as they enable them to breathe with perfect freedom. They yield freely to every movement of the body, and whilst giving beauty of figure are the most comfortable Corsets ever worn. EVERY STITCH BRITISH. Support British women workers and reduce unemployment.

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ARE you weak, despondent, lacking in energy, or suffering from lack of vitality? Then read of the remarkable success of the famous Pulvermacher Electrological Inventions, which, in the privacy of your own home, re-establish a splendid condition of manly strength and nerve vigour.

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Hitherto Electrological treatment has been reserved for those who could pay the high fees of famous specialists in Electrotherapy or who could spare the time to avail themselves of hospital or sanatorium treatment.

To-day all this is changed.

Thousands of sufferers cure themselves of troubles such as

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Nervous Weakness, Lack of Vitality, Digestive Disorders (Indigestion, Constipation, etc.), Neuritis, Rheumatism, Sciatica, Gout, Kidney and Liver Troubles, Bad Circulation, etc.,

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We invite you, if you possibly can, to call, and without any obligation examine the Pulvermacher Appliances, when Free Advice and Demonstrations will be given by the Head Superintendent. If you cannot call, **send your name and address on the form below,** and the special volume, "A Guide to Health and Strength," will be forwarded to you post paid.

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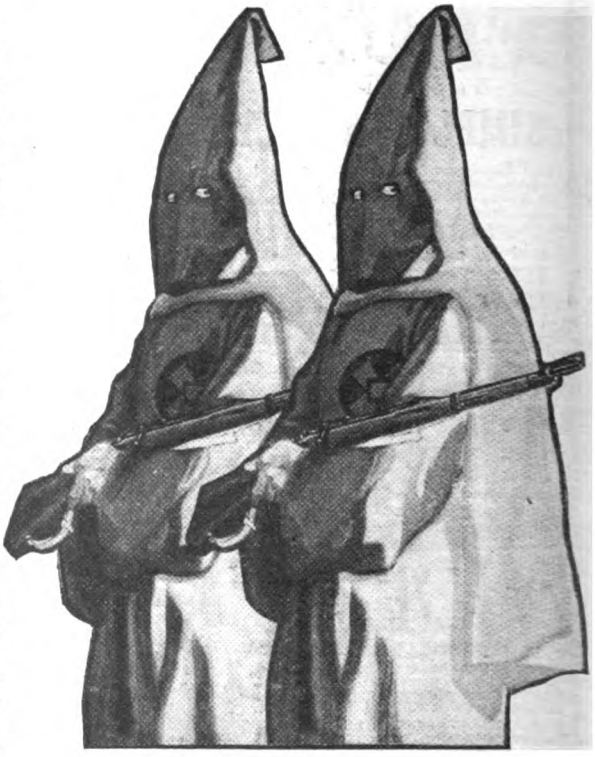
Name.....

Address.....

STRAND MAGAZINE, *Aug.*, 1921.

KU-KLUX-KLAN

"TO maintain white supremacy everlastingly over all other races, whether black, or brown, or yellow, the Klan stands for the permanent and perpetual predominance and rule of the white race in America." There you have the creed and the whole creed of this mysterious society that has lately been revived in the United States, which includes the protection of woman's honour and the sanctity of the home.



Melodramatic to the core, this organization could only survive in a country like the States. Here is an extract from a most interesting article by Shaw Desmond, which appears in the just published August *Wide World Magazine*:—

"Quite recently in a little Southern town a single horseman appeared, apparently from nowhere, in the awe inspiring dress of the Klan, and stated in a sepulchral voice from behind his mask that within a few minutes 'a band of solemn, determined men' would pass, and that nobody must follow them. In the distance could be heard the muffled thunder of hoofs coming out of the shadows. Then, headed by a herald bearing a flaming cross, two hundred night-riders appeared, each man clad in the robes of the Klan, masked and armed to the teeth. As they passed under the arc lamps, the lights were switched off, coming on again only when the uncanny riders had vanished. This was a silent recognition of their power and authority."

We are told that as a result not a single negro of ill repute could be found in the precincts of the city next day—which goes to prove the extent to which the society is feared.

Other interesting details appear in the article in the *Wide World Magazine*, together with the name of the Imperial Wizard, the only name of any member known publicly.

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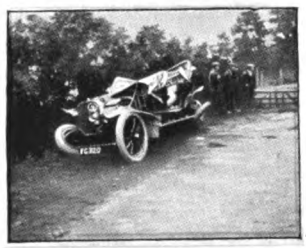

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After a good pull—a good tub with Lifebuoy.

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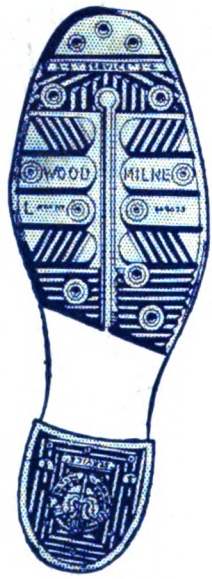

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Light on your Pocket and Light on your Feet

They give a light and noiseless tread and keep out all damp; long walks on rough roads are pleasant instead of fatiguing. Get Wood-Milnes fitted to-day; they save leather and prolong the life of footwear. Ideal for golf and all forms of outdoor sports.

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RUBBER SOLES & HEELS

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BIRD'S CUSTARD

Nothing brings out the full flavor of fruits like Bird's Custard. Therefore, always serve *BIRD'S* with your fruit, whether it be stewed, or in pudding or pie.

It is so easy to serve Bird's Custard with your fruit; in a moment you can make an exquisite creamy dish, so inviting withal that nobody ever passes Bird's Custard and stewed fresh fruit.

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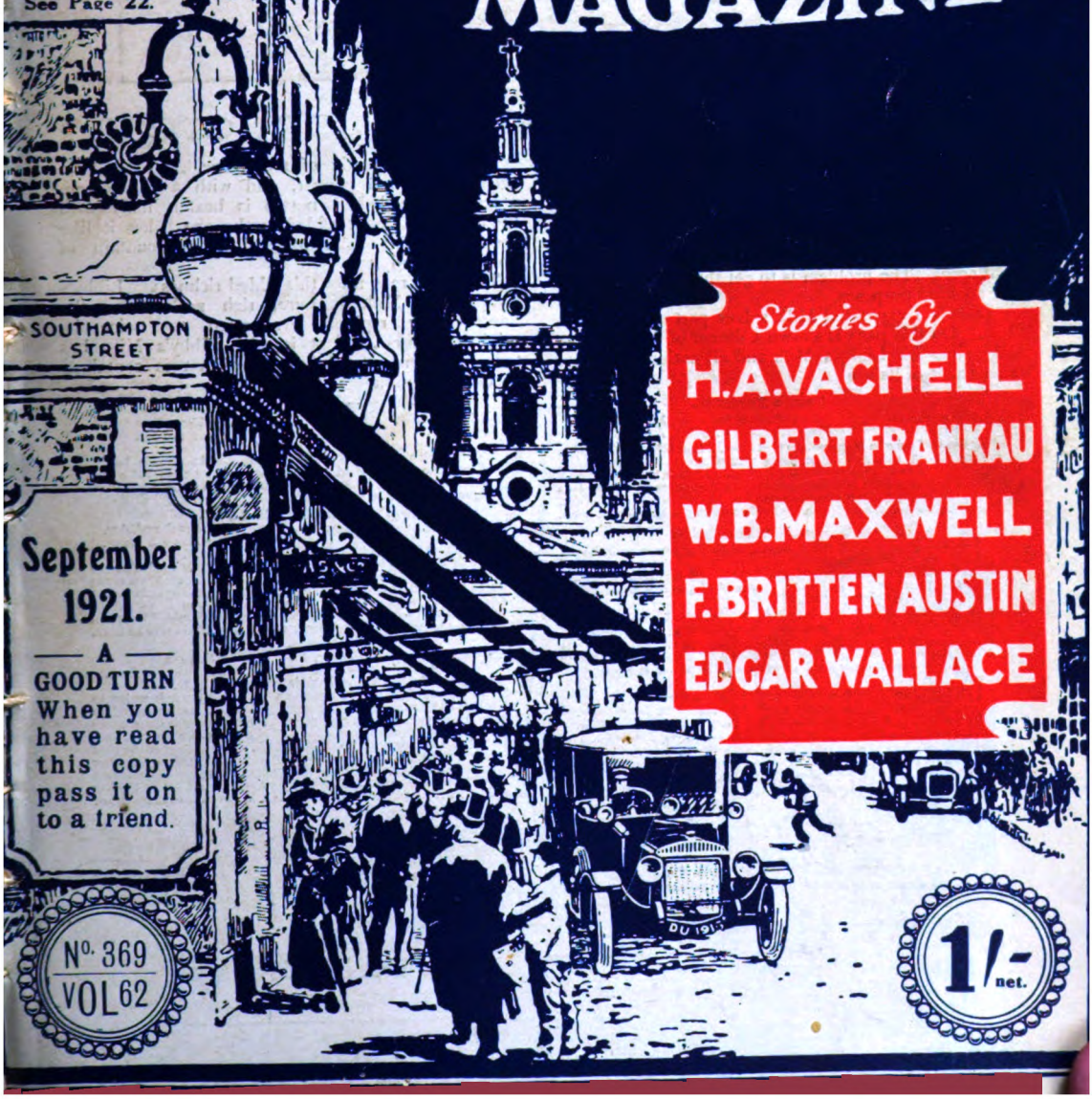
Remember, Bird's Custard adds 25% food value to the milk with which it is prepared.

C.318

NEW STORIES of the KING & THE PRINCE OF WALES

FRY'S
Pure Breakfast
COCOA
nourishes the
NERVES
See Page 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE



Stories by
H. A. VACHELL
GILBERT FRANKAU
W. B. MAXWELL
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EDGAR WALLACE

September 1921.

— A —
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When you have read this copy pass it on to a friend.

No. 369
VOL 62

1/- net.

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Made specially for Overseas men who have asked for a shoe slightly less ornamental than our full brogues and dressier than a plain shoe. The black box calf uppers are excellent supple leather, carefully cut from the choicest skins. Special attention has been given to the moulding of the heel back—the writer has worn these shoes without lacing, and they didn't slip at the heel. The soles are cut from best vegetable-tanned English Sole Leather, slightly lighter than our full brogue, but quite stout enough for anything short of rain-soaked links. They are stitched to welts by the hand-sewn principle, giving very easy tread. Insoles and all stiffeners are solid leather. Well worth 45/- in England.

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This is **Style 4177.** Box Calf Oxford, with double soles. **39/9**

Style 4161. In black glace Kid. Same price.

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If you want to preserve and protect your complexion against the effect of sun or wind—to keep your skin smooth, white and natural, to prevent redness, roughness or blemishes, use Icilma Cream—the only *true* beautifier. It is delightfully foamy—deliciously fragrant — and absolutely non-greasy — quite *different from* anything else.

A touch of face powder is useful, too, and there is none nicer than *silk-sifted* Icilma Bouquet Face Powder. *Try some to-day.* Fragrant with the same glorious perfume that has made Icilma Cream world-famed.

Icilma

Cream

Price 1/3: large pot 2/-. everywhere. Flesh-tinted Cream, 1/9 per pot. Icilma Bouquet Face Powder (two tints—Naturelle and Crème), 2/6 per box.

Use it daily and look your best

and complete your toilet with Icilma Bouquet Face Powder.

FREE Dainty Sample

of fascinating Icilma Bouquet Face Powder.

Send Postcard (stamped with ½d. stamp) for a Dainty FREE Sample Packet Icilma Bouquet Face Powder. International Icilma Trading Co., Ltd. (Dept. **14**), 37-45 King's Road, St. Pancras, London, N.W.1.

Postcards MUST have 1½d. Stamp—Envelopes 2d. Stamp.

3-PIECE SUITES

Settee and Two Easy Chairs

In Tapestry to customers' selection. Patterns on application.

EASY PAYMENTS

£3 down and 25/- monthly

or 2/- in the £ discount for cash.

The "Hendon."

THE "HENDON" £32 : 10 : 0
THE "ETON" £42 : 10 : 0

Carriage paid to railway station nearest your residence.

If not approved of can be returned and money refunded.

DESCRIPTION :—Both suites are of comfortable, full size. The "Eton" being the largest, has also loose down cushions—same are upholstered in woollen tapestry of serviceable quality and artistic designs—interior work is soundly carried out, care being taken that wear and tear is well guarded against. The best of springs, flock and canvas only being used. All pieces being mounted on reliable **castors**.

The "Eton."

Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. J. R. GRANT, Proprietor. (Dept. E), **Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL.**

Buy Wisely in getting your Winter Underwear

ASK specifically for Jason at your Outfitter's and you will be shown underwear woven from some of the finest pure wool of the world.

The shaping of each garment is perfect, and you may rely on the retention of the exact fit, for Jason is guaranteed unshrinkable.

The delightful softness is proof against repeated washings and lasts throughout wear. It is the result of the Jason Finish—an exclusive process through which all the Jason texture is taken.

Leading Outfitters and Drapers everywhere have Winter weights for men, women, and children.

JASON all-wool unshrinkable UNDERWEAR

For those who desire the best underwear they can afford, yet cannot reach to the all-wool cost, the "Olympic" Brand has been introduced, containing a percentage of cotton, but bearing otherwise the same guarantee of quality as the regular lines.

JASON UNDERWEAR CO., LEICESTER.

Φ6

Miss Binnie Hale

says :—

"I am delighted with POND'S VANISHING CREAM. I find it simply excellent for my complexion and very cleansing and soothing after using make-up at the theatre."

It's such a simple matter to be beautiful—just a fragrant refreshing touch of Pond's—the Original—Vanishing Cream on the face, neck and hands night and morning, and at every opportunity during the day. **Pond's saves the skin from sunburn and freckles, and is particularly beneficial after a sea-bathe.** Vanishes instantly—no sticky, shiny after-effects. Deliciously perfumed with Jacqueminot Roses.

"TO SOOTHE AND SMOOTH YOUR SKIN."

In handsome Opal Jars with Aluminium Screw Lids, 1/3 and 2/6, and Collapsible Tubes, 9d. and 1/3, of all Chemists and Stores. If you cannot obtain the new tube from your Chemist to-day, send us 9d. and we will despatch it per return, post free.

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Pond's Vanishing Cream

INDIGESTION and DYSPEPSIA

Cured Without Drugs.

58 DOCTORS GIVE ADVICE IN FREE BOOK.

If you suffer from Indigestion, Dyspepsia, or any other Stomach trouble, send for the Free Book just published for your benefit, and giving a formula which has already cured thousands, and will do the same for you.

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DIRECT FROM LOOM TO WEARER

Manufactured from Pure Wool in the Historic Isle of Skye.

(Supplied to Her Majesty Queen Mary and His Majesty the late King Edward.)

Moderate in Price. Patterns Free on Application. Clan Tartan Rugs from 42/6. Famed Portree Double Blankets, 60/-. Yarns and stockings all own make. Write to-day.

(S. Dept.). PORTREE WOOL MILL CO., Ltd. INVERNESS.

FORTNIGHT TAR TREATMENT

(Dr. MAVELLET'S Prescription)

GET TO KNOW IT.

A sure and permanent cure for **FALLING HAIR, DANDRUFF, AND HAIR TURNING GREY.** A home treatment which only takes three minutes a day.

PRICE 19/-, OR POST FREE 21/-

TAR POMADE, for Scurf, Dandruff, Irritation of the Scalp, **5/2.**
TAR SHAMPOO POWDER, hygienic, refreshing, **1/5.**
TAR LOTION, the wonderful Hair Tonic and Beautifier, **7/4, 14/6,** POST FREE.

Tar Treatment can be obtained from Stores and Chemists, or direct from

Consult or write— **JEAN HENRY ET CIE.** *(Laboratory 44)*
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An Essential Part of Your Dress

BEAUTY does need adorning in spite of what may be said to the contrary A discerning woman whether she be superlatively or comparatively beautiful, realises how effectively tasteful dressing adds to her natural charms Throughout history pearls have been the favourite adornment of fair women and more than ever to-day are they sought after as the essential to the perfect whole. They are as necessary to an up-to-date woman as stylish footwear and the severe throat line of modern modes seems just waiting to be relieved by a dainty pearl necklet.

The need for expending fabulous sums to secure this necessary addition to your outfit disappeared with the appearance of

Ciro Pearls

which are acknowledged by the public and the press to be the finest reproductions in existence of genuine oriental pearls. They are worn both by women who possess real pearls and those unwilling to indulge in this unnecessary extravagance

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea we will send you a necklet of Ciro Pearls 16 ins. long or a Ring, Brooch, Ear-rings, or any other Jewels mounted with Ciro Pearls (complete with case). If after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter return them to us within seven days and we will refund your money. Other lengths at proportionate rates. Gold Clasp 2/6 extra.

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Our Showrooms are on the First Floor over Lloyd's Bank.

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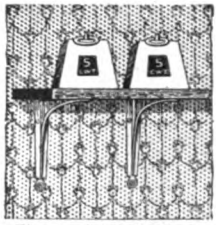
AND RAWLPLUGS

A device which enables an ordinary screw to hold in any material.

The Old Method.

For fixing and hanging Shelves, Cupboards, Coat Hooks, Pictures, Mirrors, Overmantels, Electric, Gas and Sanitary Fittings, Wires, etc.

For fixing anything by means of a screw to Walls, Ceilings, etc., of Plaster, Brick, Concrete, Marble, Stone, Tiles, etc.

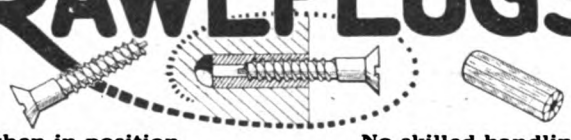


The Rawlplug Method.

One of the most difficult jobs is to put up a picture or shelf where the wall is either too soft for a nail to hold or too hard to get a nail into. An attempt usually results in much damage to the wall, and even if the job is accomplished it is not very satisfactory or lasting.
A Rawlplug is a small cylindrical body of stiffened fibres of roughly the same bore as the screw to be used. To fix, simply make a small hole with the tool supplied, push the Rawlplug into position, and turn home the screw as if in wood—and it is perfectly fast.
The Rawlplug is so made that immediately the screw enters it expands automatically against the sides of the hole; obtaining thereby a firm grip of the surrounding plaster or other materials, and a perfect thread is formed in the fibre.

HOUSEHOLD OUTFIT.
50 Rawlplugs, 50 Screws, Rawlplug Tool,
3/6
Postage 6d. extra.

RAWLPLUGS



MECHANIC'S OUTFIT.
100 Rawlplugs & supply of Screws, special Rawlplug Tool, 2 Bits,
5/6
Postage 6d. extra

Invisible when in position. Will hold half-a-ton in brick.

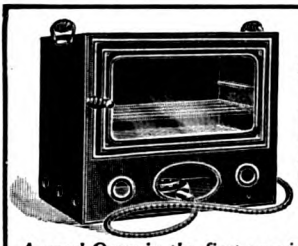
No skilled handling required. No damage to walls.

If Rawlplugs do not do all that we claim for them we will refund money in full.

A more complete outfit for Builders and Electricians, with all sizes of plugs and tools, is supplied at £2.

Sold by Ironmongers, Electricians, Stores, etc., or direct if any difficulty in obtaining.

THE RAWLPLUG CO., Ltd., 12-16, Lenthall Place, Gloucester Road, S. Kensington, S.W.7.



THE 'Onward' Portable Gas Oven

WITH GLASS DOOR.

A good Oven is the first requisite for good results in cooking.

Price 55/- Inside Measurements—18in. by 11½in. by 11in. deep.

Double Cased. Made from Blue Planished Steel and Tin Lined. Complete with Stove, Oven Tin and Grid.

IN the "ONWARD" Oven we have the rational method of baking or cooking. Simply connect gas ring to any existing gas supply with rubber or metallic tube. Light the gas and you will have baking heat in five minutes. Then put in the oven what you wish to bake or cook. No need to open the door. You may watch results while attending to other duties. Will burn three hours at a cost of 1d. for gas, and is the cheapest and most effective gas oven in the world. Send for Booklet: "A Hot Favourite."

May be obtained from any Ironmonger, or from Patentee and Sole Maker:

EDWIN CHAMBERS, Ltd., "S" Dept., "Onward" Works, BRADFORD.

Don't ask for Floor Polish—ask for

JACKSON'S FLOOR POLISH

There's a difference. Jackson's Floor Polish gives a quick shine that lasts. It never softens or gets sticky. The old-fashioned beeswax in it is what makes it so much better than any other polish. Try it and see!

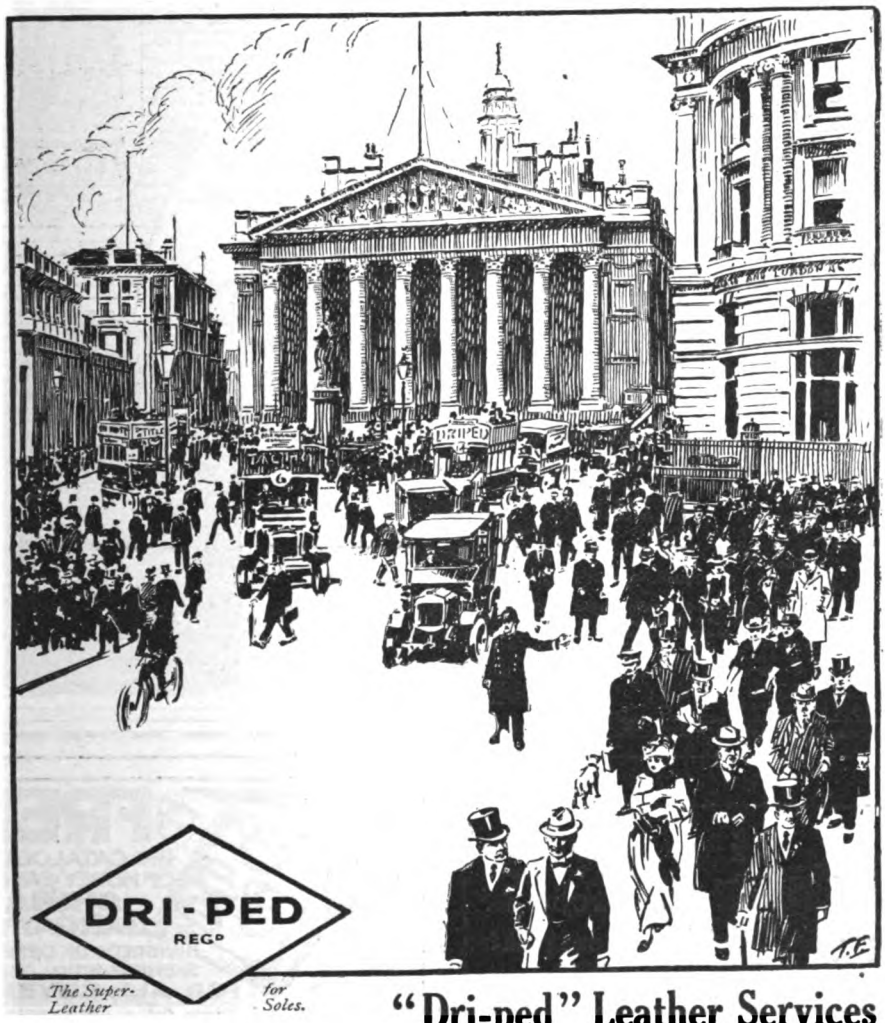
Of all Stores and Ironmongers.

The free "Jacksonizing" Booklet will tell you all about Floor Polishing. Write for a copy.

THOS. S. JACKSON & SONS, LTD., MALT STREET, OLD KENT ROAD, LONDON, S.E.1.

Manufacturers of Jackson's Lavender Furniture Cream and Jackson's Varnish Stains.

Established 1853.



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The City.

"Dri-ped," the Super-Leather for Soles, is ever welcome among City men. Its superlative waterproof quality, its double durability, lightness and flexibility ensures at once maximum economy and comfort—two essential footwear factors, especially in the case of the thousands of business and professional men who throng busy City thoroughfares in all weathers throughout the world.

"DRI-PED" is the very best sole leather that can be produced. Hides selected from the pick of the world's supply are scientifically tanned by an exclusive process, rendering the leather at least twice as wear-enduring as ordinary leather of equal thickness; lighter than ordinary leather of equal thickness, and absolutely waterproof.

It is unnecessary to use any attachments with "DRI-PED" soles to secure qualities which are inherent.

All footwear dealers can supply "DRI-PED" Soled Footwear; all footwear repairers can re-sole your boots and shoes with "DRI-PED." Look for the "DRI-PED" diamond, stamped in purple every few inches on each sole. There is no substitute for "DRI-PED." Decline inferior subterfuges.

D3 *In case of difficulty write to—*

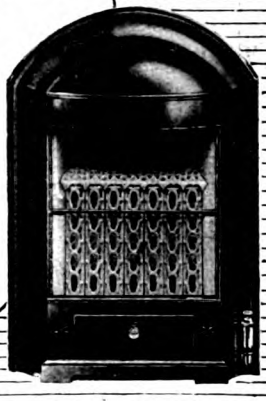
DRI - PED, LTD., BOLTON, LANCASHIRE.

Increase your comfort and reduce the labour in the home by installing Gas Fires. They ensure a warm glow at all times—at a moment's notice—involving no labour, creating no dust or dirt, which ensures a purer atmosphere and cleaner furnishings.

By Appointment CARRON

Carron Patent "Stella" Fires

embody those features that make for efficiency. They distribute a penetrating heat—*silently*—and are a decorative as well as a comforting asset in the home.



Sold by all Ironmongers, Plumbers and Hardware Merchants.

Write for No. 36M *"Stella" Gas Fire Pamphlet free on application.*

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INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER 1773

WORKS —— CARRON, STIRLINGSHIRE.

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On view at the Showrooms:—London (City), 15, Upper Thames Street, E.C.4; (West End), 50, Berners Street, W.; Liverpool, 22-30, Redcross Street; Glasgow, 125, Buchanan Street; Edinburgh, 114, George Street; Bristol, 6, Victoria Street; Birmingham, 218, 220, 222, Corporation Street.
Offices: Manchester, 14, Ridgefield; Newcastle-on-Tyne, 15, Prudhoe Street; Leeds, 15, Park Row.

Use a **RONUK** Home Polisher

to clean and polish your floors thoroughly, easily and quickly. There's nothing like

RONUK SANITARY POLISH

Unequalled as a cleanser and lasting polish. Nothing has the same refreshing smell & antiseptic value.—

RONUK is obtainable everywhere in tins in all sizes

RONUK HOME POLISHER

Price 7/6

RONUK LTD. PORTSLADE SUSSEX

FREE BIG CATALOGUE OF MONEY SAVING CHINA BARGAINS

HUNDREDS OF DESIGNS SHEWN IN ACTUAL COLORS FOR ALL BUYERS

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HOUSEHOLD and Private Orders our **SPECIALITY.** Splendid Bargains in China, Pottery, and Glass. Tea Sets from **11/3.** Dinner Sets from **38/9.** Toilet Sets from **16/9.** Complete Home Outfits from **57/6.** **CATERING CROCKERY A SPECIALITY,** as supplied to "Daily Mail." Outfits for 50 Persons from **75/-.**

SPECIAL UNBREAKABLE QUALITY
China for Kitchen, Camp, Barrack, Hospital Use.

ONLY 28/9 **PACKED FREE**

This beautiful Tea Service, 12 persons, in charming Festoon design and Gold Finish. Splendid Quality. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Tea Service, 6 persons, **18/3.** Dinner Service, **39/3.**
The Leading Pottery Mail Order Merchants. *Established 1903.*
Over 50,000 Customers: Full Value and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

Send Postcard To-day for Complete ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE **FREE**
One Hundred Designs shown in Actual Colours.

CENTURY POTTERY Co^Y
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THE CENTRAL CAFÉ, BRIDLINGTON, decorated with "SATINETTE."

Deydol Distemper instead of Wall-paper is a splendid investment, and **Cripon Supervar** on surfaces requiring varnishing is unsurpassed for fine appearance and durability.

All good class Decorators will use the above materials at your request.

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THE MOST ATTRACTIVE AND ENDURING OF ALL MODERN DECORATIVE "FINISHES"

THE rich, smooth, lustrous decorative finish which SATINETTE makes possible is obtainable with no other material. By using SATINETTE for the decoration of your home you can achieve results that for sheer beauty, lasting worth, and protective qualities are unapproached.

Any first-class Decorator will substantiate these statements and will be glad to use SATINETTE to your instructions; the wider his experience the higher will be his opinion of SATINETTE.

Use SATINETTE for all interior woodwork. It is made in Gloss White, Flat White, and a wide range of pleasing shades. Put ***your*** home on a par with the world's finest decorative work, which is invariably carried out in SATINETTE Enamel Paint.

Write to-day for the beautifully illustrated "SATINETTE" brochure, sent post free on request if you mention the name and address of your Decorator.

PINCHIN, JOHNSON & CO., Ltd.

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Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA

in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **10/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed.

Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

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YOU may have to work many hours a day—I.C.S. Courses are prepared especially to meet the requirements of busy people. No matter in what line of work you may be engaged, a course of training with the I.C.S. will qualify you for a better position with higher pay. Moderate inclusive fees ; easy terms of payment.

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Please send me your free book containing full particulars of the Course of Correspondence Training before which I have marked X.

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NOTE.—If the subject desired is not in above list, write it here :—

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COAT SWEATER
Style 352.
Heavy Knit Pure Wool - **50/-**

Jaeger Knitted Garments are so comfortable and yet so smart that, once worn, nothing but Jaeger will satisfy.

JAEGER
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LONDON DEPOTS:

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Jaeger Agents in every town and throughout the British Empire.

"SHEARER" KNITTING AND RUG WOOLS.

DIRECT from Spinner to Knitter

"Shearer" Knitting and Rug Wools
Are Cheapest and Best—
WE do the Spinning,
YOU do the rest.

THE JUMPER SEASON
IS JUST COMMENCING.

Send for Free Patterns of "SHEARER" KNITTING AND RUG WOOLS.

Over 25,000 Parcels of "SHEARER" Wools were sent out in 1920. Shoals of testimonials have been received testifying as to their excellent wearing qualities, and continue to come to hand daily. "Shearer" Wools are cheap and good, and "go further" than other makes. "Shearer" Wools cannot be purchased from any retailer, so you get them

DIRECT FROM THE SPINNERS

paying no middle profits. Remember you save shillings on every Jumper and Rug you make by buying straight from our Mills.

"SHEARER" RUG WOOL FOR TURKEY MATS AND RUGS will last a lifetime. **3/4** per lb. Canvas, Hooks, and Gauges supplied.

"SHEARER" JUMPER, COAT AND DRESS WOOL (many Colours), from 4/- per lb.

Carriage Paid on Orders of 10/- and upwards.

W. & J. SMITH,
SPINNERS,
GREAT HOLME MILLS,
LEICESTER.
Est. 1864. Tel. 2044 2045.

We also stock Artificial Silks in a variety of charming colours.
5/9 per ¼-lb. Hank.

The *Leicester Mail* of July 8th, 1921, says:—"In Leicester we have an important firm of spinners who are selling their rug and knitting wools direct to the public. Messrs. W. and J. Smith, Great Holme Street, by their policy of cutting out middle profits should be certain of attracting huge business with their 'Shearer' brand wools."

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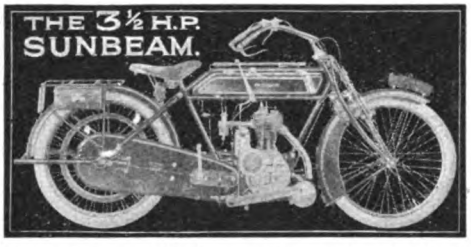
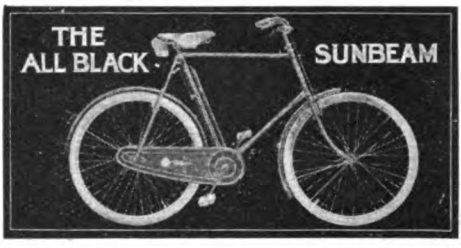
This is the 3½ H.P. Sunbeam Motor Bicycle, with Patent Enclosed Oil-Bathed Chain Transmission. It is the finest Double Purpose Mount in the world, and will take a sidecar anywhere.



The Design, Workmanship, and All-Black Finish are superior to any other machine on the market. The control is easy, and it is economical in running.

Write for List 4, *free, to*

This is the All-Black Sunbeam Pedal Bicycle with the little Oil Bath Gear Case, which automatically lubricates the Chain and Driving Bearings. The machine therefore runs under ideal conditions always and without friction.



The Sunbeam costs more to begin with, but it outlasts half-a-dozen ordinary cycles, costs nothing for repairs, and doubles the pleasure of cycling.

Write for List 5, *free, to*

The Makers:

John Marston, Limited, Sunbeamland, Wolverhampton.

Your petrol bill will be higher!

OF course, who ever heard of a saddle, a comfort-giving device, saving petrol?

Why, the very object of it is to make you really comfortable and eager to go further, and it is in proportion as it enables you to do so that it is a success as a saddle.

So, then, your petrol, oil, and tyre bill will be higher, naturally, because you will go further when your machine is fitted with the luxurious

BROOKS

REGISTERED TRADE MARK

CANTILEVER SADDLE.

Send for 48-page Catalogue.

J. B. BROOKS & CO., Ltd.,
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A Greater Need Than Ever.

The reduced purchasing power of money, heavy Death Duties, high and ever increasing rate of Income Tax, combine to make an *adequate* Life Assurance Policy a greater need than ever.

Whether your Estate be large or small it will pay you to take thought of the heavy toll that will be levied on it by the Government at your death.

PROVIDE FOR DEATH DUTIES

Write us for a Scheme to suit your Needs.

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SEND HIM TO OUR WORKS TO BE TRAINED FOR

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Complete PRACTICAL MOTOR ENGINEERING Training

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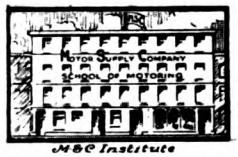
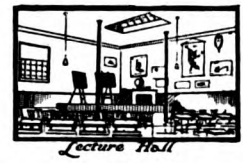
THE Motor Trade affords countless opportunities for advancement. For years and years the demand for cars, garages, and mechanical knowledge of the motor industry will far exceed the supply. Therefore this is your opportunity. Place independence in your son's hands; let him achieve great prosperity and comfort for his old age. Training is practical at the M.S.C. Institute, Newcastle-on-Tyne, where some of the finest Machinery is installed for instructional purposes. We specialise in Motor Engineering, in which Trade we have placed thousands of our students, numerous vacancies occurring daily for well-paid positions both at home and abroad.



M&C Institute



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The Largest Motor Engineering Training Institute in Great Britain.

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NO OTHER LAMP GIVES YOU SUCH A STRONG, STEADY SHINING LIGHT—SOFT AND NATURAL AND RESTFUL TO THE EYES.

A WONDERFUL LAMP.
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BURNS ORDINARY PETROL
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300 CANDLE POWER

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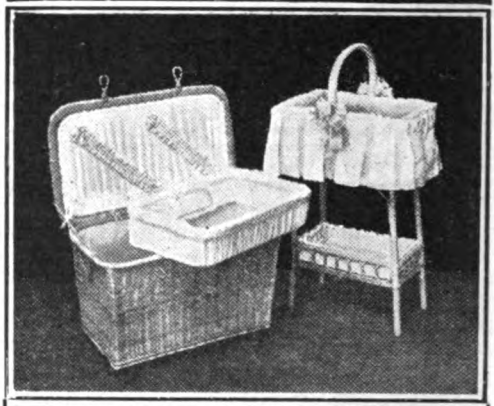

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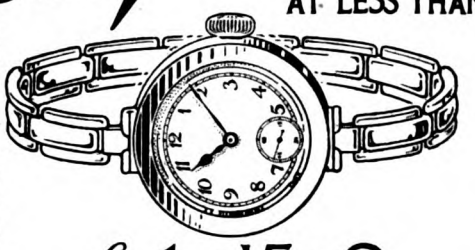

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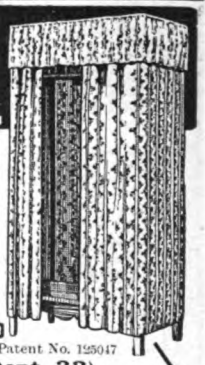

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A dingy film

Teeth become coated with a dingy film. At first it is viscous—you can feel it with your tongue. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and remains.

That film is what discolours, not the teeth. It dims the natural lustre, and is now regarded as the potential source of most tooth troubles.

Film is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth and the acid may cause decay.

Must combat it

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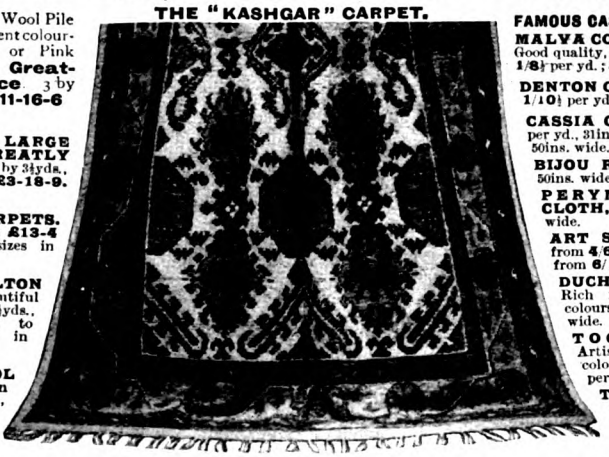

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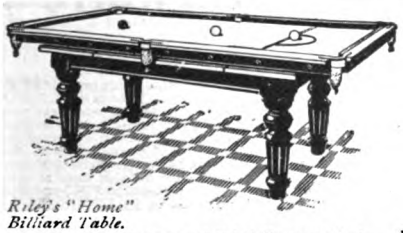

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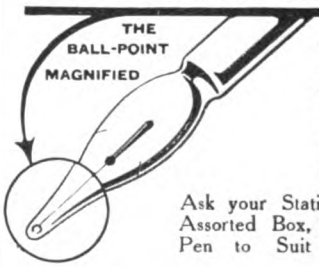

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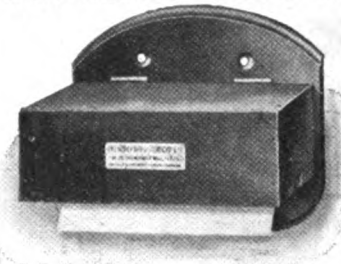

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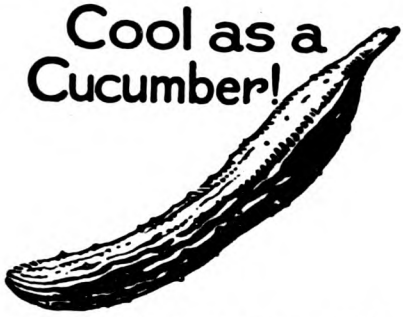

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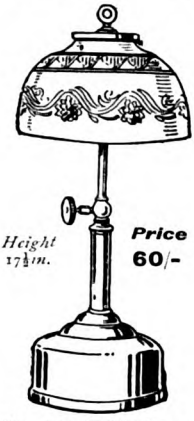

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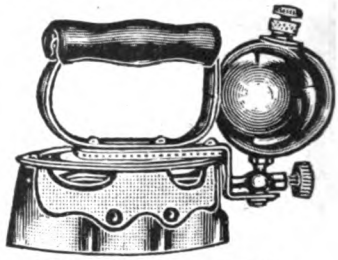

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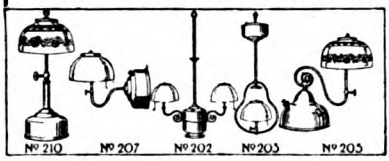

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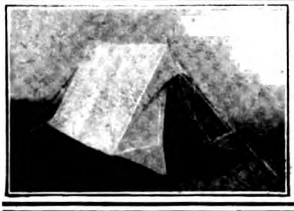

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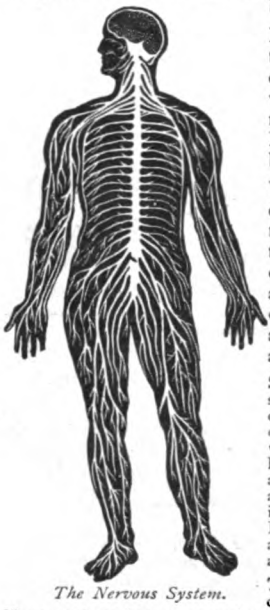

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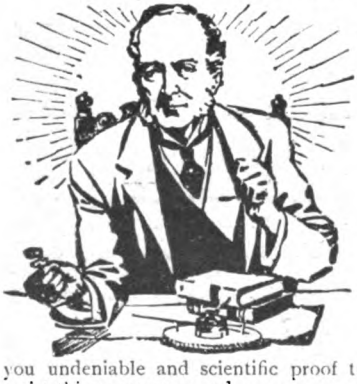

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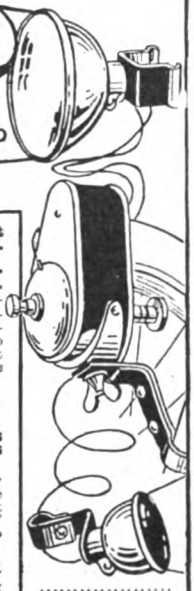

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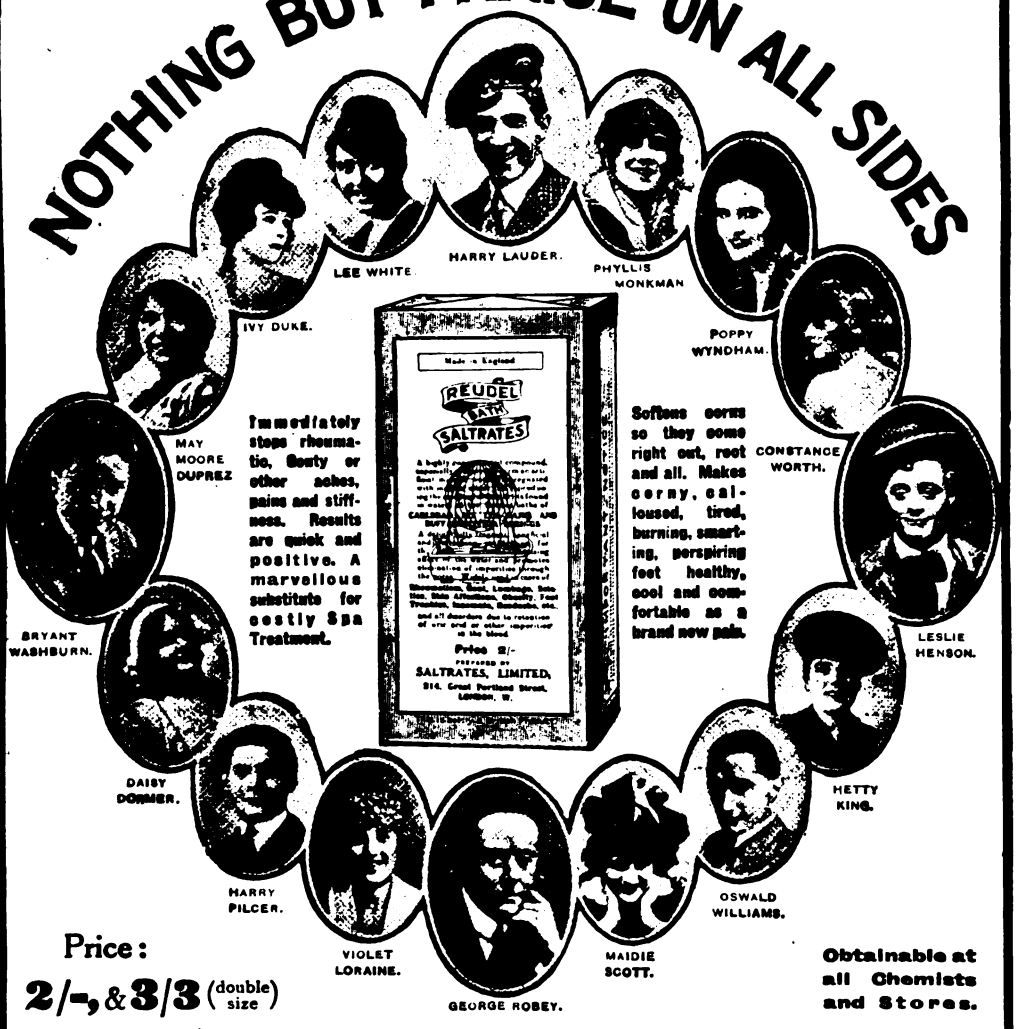

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for September, 1921.

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Frontispiece: "Against the dark background of the curtain of the door we all three saw a spectral picture of a house-front with a sign across it in large Greek characters. 'Stavropoulos!' ejaculated Forsyth."

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE is printed by The Cornwall Press, Ltd., and published monthly by the Proprietors, George Newnes, Limited, 8 to 11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, England. Subscription price to any part of the world, post free, for one year, 15s. (Canada, 14s.). Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office. Cases for binding volumes of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may be obtained to order from Booksellers for 3s., or post free for 3s. 4d. direct from the Office. Half-yearly Volumes, 7s. 6d. net.

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The Index to Volume 61 can be obtained on application to the Publisher.

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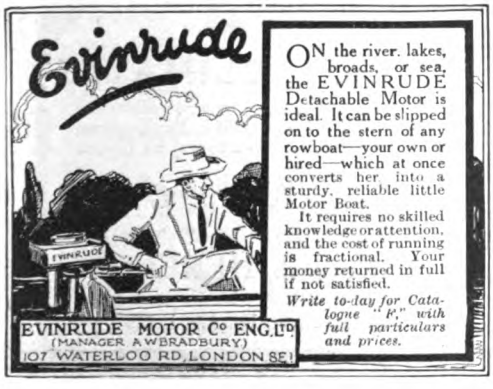

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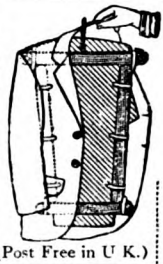

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"The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone,"

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE.

"Against the dark background of the curtain of the door we all three saw a spectral it in large Greek characters. 'Stavropoulos!'

picture of a house-front with a sign across ejaculated Forsyth."

SECOND SIGHT

by

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

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OUR after-lunch coterie at the club had relapsed into silence and newspapers in the corner of the smoking-room.

"What nonsense this archaism is in modern art!" exclaimed one of the group suddenly, holding up a reproduction of a much-discussed new picture which represented a saint with the usual dinner-plate at the back of his head. "He would be infinitely more effective if he were painted like a normal human being."

Dr. Harford, a physician of some distinction in the city, looked up sharply.

"It may be nonsense from the artistic point of view," he said. "But the halo itself is a scientific fact."

"What?" queried another, incredulously.

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"Do you mean to say that saints actually have halos, doctor?"

"Saints—and sinners as well. There's no distinction of virtue," he replied.

"Come, doctor! You can't make us believe that!"

"It is a fact, I tell you," he repeated. "I don't say it is ordinarily visible. But it is there all the time—and it *can* be seen." He smiled. "I've seen it myself. Quite a story, that occasion. Like to hear it?"

Dr. Harford was one of our established *raconteurs*. There was a ragged chorus of "Fire away! Let's have it, doctor!"

WELL (he began), you remember that after the Armistice I went to Constantinople with the Relief Commission? My particular section was one of those which remained at Stamboul. Three of us, a clever doctor man named Thompson, a young fellow—Forsyth, who was a millionaire from California—and myself, housed ourselves very comfortably together in a flat in Pera which during the war had been occupied by a German doctor. Pera, you probably know, is the European quarter. We three men kept together pretty much and had little to do with the other fellows in our section. But, of course, we associated, like all the other doctors and voluntary helpers, with the lady-nurses who had accompanied us.

They were all nice girls, but there was one who was exceptionally interesting. She was the youngest of the nurses. Her name was Netta Mansfield. There was an attractiveness about her that wasn't merely a matter of her youth nor of her undeniable prettiness. She had personality—and she radiated an irresponsible gaiety that was infectious. When the bright eyes in the pretty little face under the fair hair smiled at you she was really fascinating. Of course, we were all in love with her, but Forsyth made most of the running. How far she reciprocated his evident feelings it was impossible to say, for she was an arrant little flirt and her smiles beamed equally on all of us.

We were not left quite to our own devices in Constantinople. The Turkish Government very thoughtfully told off officials to look after us, ostensibly to give us every assistance in our mission, actually of course to throw every obstacle in our way. The particular official assigned to us called himself Ahmed Hassan. His age was something under thirty and he was a typical example of the Young Turk, aping the European to excess, his hair plastered sleekly back from his forehead, his dress effeminately elegant. He had been educated in France and Germany and he spoke English fluently. He was less offensive than most of his type, and, from the guide-book point of view, was certainly helpful. Effusively polite and loudly disclaiming all old-fashioned Mohammedan prejudices, he escorted us to every sight in the city, whether mosque or restaurant. A motor-car—alleged to be his own—was at our service whenever our own official cars were not available.

I do not know whether women are less acute than men in their perception of the qualities which distinguish a gentleman from the other kind, but certainly the ladies of our party did not share our aversion to Ahmed Hassan.

They persisted in regarding him as virtually the European which he strove to be, and to our disgust would accompany him, two or three together, in his motor-car to various points of interest around the city. He succeeded in impressing on them, of course, that in his own sphere he was quite a personage. Some of them openly flirted with him, and perhaps Netta Mansfield was the worst offender. I don't suppose she realized the encouragement she gave him. She couldn't help flirting with everybody—it was just the expression of her natural vivacity. The dandified young Turk responded only by the ceremonious politeness he had picked up and exaggerated from his Parisian acquaintances. He was always scrupulously respectful. But sometimes, when innocently enough she coquetted with him, just as she would have done with a young man at home, there was a flash in his eyes—suppressed on the instant—which made me uneasy. The hereditary instincts of a Turk, no matter how emancipated he may consider himself, do not qualify him for a just appreciation of a modern girl's freedom of manners.

I was not alone in my uneasiness. I could see that Forsyth was more troubled than he cared to confess at the possible effect of these provocative, if innocent, familiarities upon our suave young cicerone. Once or twice, indeed, he ventured on a mild reproof, but her merrily scornful "Don't be so absurd, Jack!" emphasized by the candour of her eyes, stilled the words upon his tongue.

One day, in our flat, he opened himself to me upon the subject.

"I wish you would say a word to Netta, doctor," he said. "I don't like the way she makes herself cheap with that young Turk. She doesn't mean anything, of course. She probably doesn't realize what she's doing half the time. But one can't expect him to understand. And, anyway, one can never trust these fellows."

"Why don't you speak frankly to her yourself?" I replied. "You are more intimate with her than I am."

He shook his head.

"It's no use, doctor," he answered. "I've

tried. She only laughs at me for what she calls my ridiculous jealousy. She *won't* see what I mean."

"Well, I'll do my best," I agreed. "But you know what she is. She thinks no wrong and she sees no wrong—and she is a very self-willed young woman."

I found an opportunity that same afternoon. Passing by the hostel where the nurses of our section were lodged, I met Netta in the doorway with two or three of her companions, evidently prepared for an outing. In answer to my question, she informed me that they were going for a joy-ride with Ahmed Hassan. I drew her aside and, availing myself of the privileges of my grey hairs, remonstrated with her seriously on the imprudence of her conduct.

"Why, doctor," she exclaimed, with her bright young laugh, "what harm can there be in it? Even if he is a Turk, he's a civilized one. I think he's a bit soft with all his bowing and scraping, but he behaves himself like a gentleman. I can't see any difference between him and a Frenchman or an Italian. He's had a European education, and he doesn't believe in harems or anything like that. Besides, we have permission and I never go out with him alone. But really, doctor," she finished, with a touch of resentment, "Mr. Hassan has been very kind to all of us—you men as well—and I don't see why, if he behaves himself like a gentleman, we shouldn't treat him like one. At any rate, I'm going to treat him so until I have cause to think otherwise!"

With which defiance she tossed her pretty fair head and ran out into the road to meet the car, which at that moment came along at a breakneck pace with the elegant Ahmed Hassan at the wheel. I watched them depart, Netta by the side of Hassan, her companions in the tonneau. She turned and waved a peace-making to me as they whirled off in a cloud of dust.

THE next morning, at an hour when I am ashamed to confess that I was still in bed, Forsyth dashed into my room, his face chalky white, his eyes staring as though he were out of his senses.

"She's gone, doctor!" he cried. "Gone! Disappeared utterly! Oh, my God!" He clutched at his brow in a gesture of desperation, as if to hold his wits together. "Gone!"

I sprang up from my bed.

"Not Netta?" I exclaimed.

"Yes—Netta!" The man was shaking in every limb. "Gone! Utterly disappeared! Netta! It must have been in the night. A message came from the matron—her room was empty this morning. Doctor! Get your clothes on—we must find her—we must find her at once!"

I needed no stimulation to get dressed. As I slipped into my clothes, I questioned him for further details.

"But how could she get out? Isn't the door looked or guarded?"

"Both," he answered. "It must have been through her window. She sleeps in a little room on the ground floor overlooking the garden at the back."

"Alone?"

"Yes—the other girl usually with her has gone sick—in hospital. She was alone last night. Oh, Netta! Netta!" His cry of grief and despair was heartrending.

"Perhaps she has gone off on some madcap escapade," I hazarded, trying to imagine anything but the worst. "It would be just like her to go off to see the dawn over the Bosphorus or something equally harebrained."

He shook his head.

"There's a twelve-foot wall round that garden, doctor. I've seen it. And there are signs of a struggle among the bushes outside her window."

"You've been there this morning?"

"Yes. I dashed round directly I heard the news. They could tell me nothing—except that she went to bed happily enough last night and that her room was empty this morning. It has big French windows and they were open."

"But who could have abducted her?" I asked, putting on my coat. "Surely not——" I stopped at the suspicion, almost a certitude, which flashed into my mind.

"Yes! That's who it is!" he answered, vehemently. "That damned scoundrel Hassan! You know as well as I do! Come along, doctor! I want you to go round with me and find him. When we lay hands on him we sha'n't be long in getting hold of Netta. Thompson is coming with us. I've told him. Oh, my God, man, be quick, be quick!"

"I'm ready," I answered, picking up my hat. "I think you're right. The first thing to do is to find Hassan. We'll see what he has to say for himself."

"I don't suppose we shall find him in his office, though he usually gets there at an unearthly early hour," said Forsyth. "It will be a matter of tracking him down. But I've a car waiting outside. Put that gun in your pocket!" he added, pointing to my revolver on the dressing-table. "You may want it. I have mine. There will be a few sharp words with Mr. Hassan when we *do* find him!"

I slipped the weapon into my pocket and followed him into the living-room, where Thompson was awaiting us. Without more discussion, we dashed downstairs and into the Red Cross car for which Forsyth had telephoned.

A few minutes later we pulled up at the Ministry where Ahmed Hassan had a little office, which he attended when he was not chaperoning us over Constantinople. The Turkish sentry at the main entrance, recognizing us, let us pass without hindrance. It was by no means the first time we had visited our cicerone in the gloomy building where he exercised his somewhat mysterious official functions, and we ran quickly up the stairs to his room. Without the formality of a knock, Forsyth flung open the door.

There, much to our surprise, was our friend, Mr. Ahmed Hassan, placidly seated at his desk. He looked up at our entrance and, all politeness, rose to his feet.

"Good morning, gentlemen," he said, with his suave Continental accent. "To what do I owe the honour——"

He got no farther. Forsyth sprang across the room and gripped him by the throat with one hand, while with the other he pulled the revolver from his pocket.

"Where is she?" he cried, like a madman. "Where is she? Answer me this instant—or I'll blow your scoundrelly brains out!"

Poor Hassan could not have answered even if he would. Forsyth's furious grip on his throat was throttling the life out of him. He writhed in unavailing efforts to free himself, his eyes bulging almost out of his head, his face congested.

WITH some difficulty we dragged our friend away, held him back.

"Don't be a fool, Forsyth!" said Thompson, angrily. "Killing the man won't help us!"

"I'll kill him if he doesn't tell us where she is!" he replied, glaring at the Turk.

"Let us first ascertain whether he knows anything at all about the matter," I put in. I turned to Hassan. He had sunk back on his chair and was even now only beginning to recover his breath. He looked at me with an anger that was venomous.

"I will have diplomatic satisfaction for this outrage!" he gasped. "You shall answer for this!"

"We offer our apologies here and now for our friend's violence, Mr. Hassan," I said. "He is not quite responsible for his actions at this moment. He has had a cruel shock, and it is unfortunate that you should be connected in his mind with the cause of it. Perhaps you can give us some information as to the whereabouts of Miss Mansfield?"

I was observing him narrowly as I spoke, and the astonishment on his face impressed me with its genuineness.

"Miss Mansfield?" he queried. "Why—what has happened to her?" There was no trace of anger in him now. It had vanished in his startled concern. "Miss Mansfield? But she was all right yesterday——"

"Miss Mansfield disappeared from her room during the night or early this morning, Mr. Hassan," I said, explicitly. "As you were much in her company, it is only natural——"

"That you should suspect me as responsible for her disappearance!" he chimed in with his agreement. "Of course, doctor! I quite understand! You have doubtless heard that I am in the habit of abducting young ladies." His irony flashed out at me. "We Turks of course need to fill our harems! Gentlemen, your insinuation is an unwarrantable insult!" He rose in anger from his chair. "I will ask you to be good enough to leave my room!"

"Not until he has told us what he knows!" muttered Forsyth, wriggling in Thompson's grasp. "The oily scoundrel!"

I interposed.

"Mr. Hassan," I said, "I beg you will take no notice of any remarks made by my friend here. You will well understand that he is in an over-excited condition. Please accept my assurances that Dr. Thompson and I do not come here to make any insinuation. We come merely to ask your advice and assistance in this distressing matter."

He made a helpless gesture with his hands.

"But, my dear doctor," he said, "what can I do? I know nothing about the business. It is true that Miss Mansfield was one of a party which accompanied me on an excursion yesterday. But she returned safely—you can satisfy yourselves as to that. The other ladies of the party can testify to it. Since then I have not seen Miss Mansfield. Until you informed me of it, I was ignorant that anything had occurred to her."

Prejudiced as I was against the young man's sleek plausibility, his manner seemed to me quite convincing.

Forsyth wrested himself from Thompson's grasp. He came straight up to Hassan and looked him in the eyes.

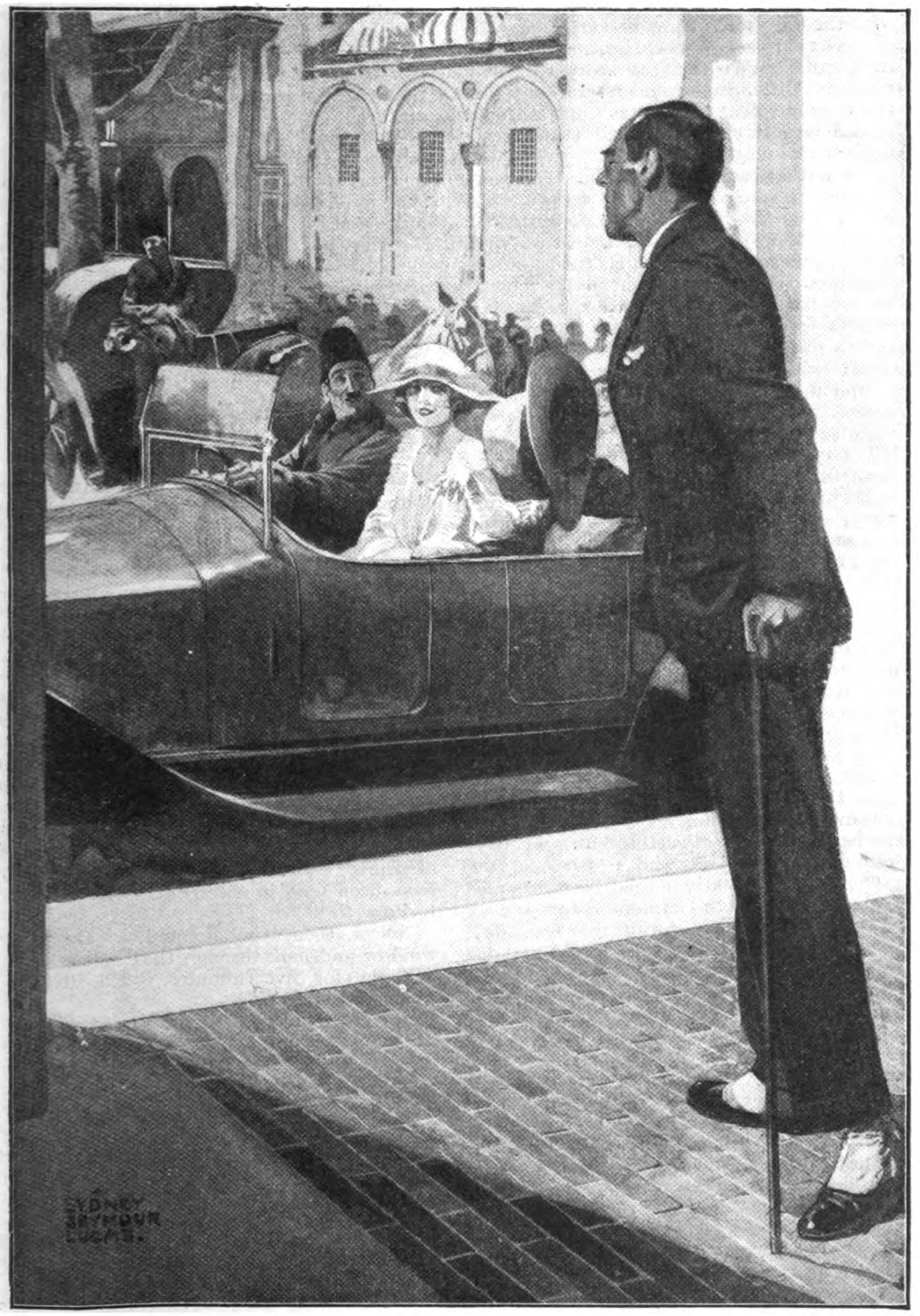
"For all that, I believe you know where she is!" he said. "And I assure you I am going to find her!"

Hassan made a gesture which waived resentment of the insult, as if in sympathetic comprehension of a mind disordered by anxiety.

"You have my best wishes for success, Mr. Forsyth," he answered, coolly.

Irony or not, we had no means of detecting it. The young man's suave effrontery, if effrontery it was, was impenetrable.

"Come along, Forsyth," said Thompson, touching him on the arm. "We shall do no more here. Let us go to the Allied Mission."



I watched them depart, Netta by the side of Hassan. She turned and waved a peace-making to me as they whirled off."

TO the Allied Mission we went, Forsyth all the way reiterating his unshaken conviction that Ahmed Hassan had a hand in the affair. We told our story to a sympathetic Intelligence officer, and left with the assurance that no stone in Constantinople should be left unturned until the girl was found.

The authorities were as good as their word. The most astute of their secret service agents were put on the trail, but with no result. In view of our suspicions, the strictest watch, of course, was kept on Ahmed Hassan. He was shadowed wherever he went. His rooms—he, too, had a flat on the borders of the Pera district—were broken into and ransacked by agents disguised as burglars. Nothing was found which in the least suggested any complicity in the affair. Day after day passed and not even the slightest trace of the girl was discovered.

Forsyth was distracted with anxiety. He made no secret now of his love for Netta.

Thompson and myself began to worry about our friend. He was approximating dangerously close to a break-down, nervous and mental. When not wandering about the streets in the feverish excitement of some illusory clue, he would sit for hours in our flat, sucking at an empty pipe and staring vacantly in front of him, muttering disjointed phrases that were not directed to us, but were the automatic articulations of fragmentary thoughts flitting through his brain. We tried everything we could think of to rouse him from this neuropathological stupor, to kindle interest in other subjects than the one which dominated him. But nothing touched him. We even discussed the heroic remedy of getting him sent away from Constantinople.

Our flat, as I told you, had been occupied during the war by a German doctor, and we had taken over his furniture. One day, when we were almost in despair for a distraction that would even momentarily interest or amuse our friend, Thompson, who was rummaging about in a cupboard full of our predecessor's effects, uttered a cry of gratified surprise.

"Look here, Harford! Have you ever seen this curious little toy before?"

I went across to him and saw a small box, with the name of a well-known London firm of medical publishers on the inside of the open lid.

"What is it?" I asked.

"You've heard of the Becquerel 'N' rays, haven't you?" he responded. "This is the apparatus for viewing them."

I had, of course, read in the scientific press just before the war the controversy which ensued upon the discovery of those mysterious rays with which the names of Dr. Becquerel and Dr. Blandlot were identified, but I had never had an opportunity of actually seeing them for myself. With this box before me, I now remembered hearing that the necessary apparatus was upon the market.

Thompson pulled out from the box a screen of two small sheets of glass, fastened in a frame face to face but about half an inch apart, and some stoppered bottles filled with blue crystals.

"It is all here," he said. He looked at me as though silently asking my approval of a scheme in his head. Would an experiment amuse our friend? I nodded. "Forsyth!" cried Thompson, sharply. "Would you like to see a little scientific magic?"

Forsyth roused himself, languidly enough, and came over to us.

"What do you mean?" he asked, glancing with the slightest of interest at the box. "What is it?"

"You've heard of the halos surrounding the saints—the auras that the theosophists talk of?"

"A lot of rubbish," said Forsyth, contemptuously. "What are you driving at?"

"Would you like to see the human aura with your own eyes?"

"I'll do anything you like," said Forsyth. "Anything to pass the time. What is it—a conjuring trick?"

"No," replied Thompson, "it's a sober scientific demonstration. Wait a minute!"

He brought the box to the table and extracted its contents. Then, after a glance at the printed instructions which accompanied it, he mixed the blue crystals into a solution and poured the fluid into the space between the two glass plates. The result, of course, was a blue screen such as might have been used in a camera. He handed it to Forsyth.

"Now, then," he directed. "Go to the window and look through that screen at the daylight for five minutes. I'll tell you when the time's up."

Forsyth obeyed, with the air of a man to whom everything is equally devoid of real interest. For five minutes, while Thompson stood watch in hand, he gazed through the little blue screen out of the window.

"Time!" said Thompson, going behind him and closing the jalousied shutters so as to darken the room. "Put the screen on the table and look at Harford."

Forsyth did as he was told. He laid aside the screen, glanced at me—and then stared at me as though there were something astonishingly abnormal in my appearance.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "It's extraordinary!" Thompson came round from the window and joined me. "You too—Thompson! It's round both of you!

A different colour—yours is blue—Harford's is yellow!" His amazement had startled him into a genuine interest where his obsession was for the moment forgotten. "What the deuce is it? How do you explain it?"

"I'll tell you in a moment," replied Thompson. "Would you like to try, Harford?"

"I should—very much," I answered.

He swung back the shutters again and I too stared for five minutes at the daylight through the blue screen. Then, the room once more darkened, I put down the screen and looked at my companions.

AROUND both of their bodies, but not actually in contact with them, was a sort of coloured mist extending for about six inches and following their contour. The mist was striated with fine lines, which in Thompson's case stood out straight like the rays of a halo, but which drooped, with a suggestion of feebleness, all round Forsyth's figure.

"Do you see colours?" asked Thompson.

"Yes," I replied. "Yours is blue—Forsyth's is a kind of green." I raised my finger-tips before my eyes. There, streaming from them, were the mysterious emanations—a primrose yellow—which met as I held them about a foot apart. There was something peculiarly uncanny about seeing this radiance—like gas not ignited until a short distance from the jet—issuing from one's own body. "Mine's yellow," I remarked. "Exactly as Forsyth said."

"Good," agreed Thompson. "I'll just have a look myself and then I'll tell you all about it."

He, in his turn, looked through the screen at the daylight and then turned to us. He nodded his head with some satisfaction.

"I see the colours also," he said. "It is curious that the three of us should be able to see them. Anyone can see the mist of the aura, but only a minority can actually see its colour. We three are evidently highly susceptible subjects."

"But what is it that one sees?" asked Forsyth. "I can see the halos all round both of you plainly still."

"You will see them for an hour or so yet," replied Thompson. "The blue solution in this screen—it is a solution of dicyanin, but I don't know the exact formula—has the peculiar property of enhancing the receptivity of the optic nerve, or of the sense-organs behind it. This effect persists for some hours before it finally dies away."

"But what is it?" queried Forsyth, now thoroughly interested. "Electricity?"

"No," replied Thompson. "What you see are the Becquerel 'N' rays—which is merely a name for an incompletely understood radio-activity of the human body. Certain people—those of the temperament called 'psychic'—can see them at all times without any special preparation. It explains the old story of the halo and the aura. The colour varies considerably with the health, character, and mental activity of the individual—as also does the straightness of the rays. Yours, for example, my friend, are drooping in a way that suggests your urgent need of medical care."

"It's uncanny," observed Forsyth. "One would never have suspected it."

Thompson shrugged his shoulders.

"There is much in the mystery of life that one would never suspect," he said. "This is only another example of the insufficiency of our normal senses. What do you know of the universe that surrounds you? The merest fraction! Consider!" He sat himself down in a chair, put his finger-tips—still emitting the blue rays—together in the way he had when he was about to expound one of his philosophical theses. "How do you perceive anything? How do you perceive us here, for example? By vibrations emitted from us which impinge upon your sensory nerves and are transmitted by them to cerebral centres. Every thought-impulse in my brain, for example—modifies those vibrations," he continued. "But—and this is the important point—only a fractional percentage of the total range of known vibrations is perceptible to our normal sensory system. We only know anything because we register the vibrations emanating from it—and if you display graphically on a chart all known vibrations and allot one inch for those of which the correlations are known, you would need a chart a mile long to express the unknown remainder."

"Which are the 'N' rays, then?" asked Forsyth.

"The 'N' rays are those immediately beyond the ultra-violet—more than one thousand billions of vibrations a second. Normally unperceived, the dicyanin increases the susceptibility of human vision sufficiently to include them, just as under hashish, for example, the perception of sound is enormously enhanced. It is a fact—one can't say how—that they do correspond in some way to the mental, emotional, and physical state of the human individual. Certain people—those psychically perceptive people who can see the aura without the preliminary use of the dicyanin screen—allege that changes in the inner psychic entity so strongly affect the vibrations emanated from it that they can at times visualize what they call 'thought-forms," built up by the mental action of the person they are looking at."

"By Jove!" exclaimed Forsyth. "I'd

like to see the thought-forms round that scoundrel, Ahmed Hassan ! "

" It would be worth trying ! " I ejaculated, seized with the idea.

Thompson nodded.

" It is just possible we might get a clue," he said, thoughtfully, " if only from changes in his aura when we mention the subject. I don't know about more than that—although the dicyanin has made all three of us virtually ' psychics '—clairvoyants. The effect will persist for some time yet——" He reflected for a moment and then jumped up from his chair in some excitement.

" We'll try it, Forsyth ! His thoughts—whatever else they are—are vibrations in the grey matter of his brain. If those vibrations reach our abnormally heightened consciousness—focused on the subject as they are—we might be able to get some hint from them, to reconstruct the hidden picture in his mind. Philosophically, the thing is possible ! "

" He'll be here at any moment," I put in. " He promised to come round this afternoon."

" Let's try it ! " urged Forsyth. " We can't neglect anything—fanciful or not ! "

" There's no fancy about this," replied Thompson. " It's no more fanciful than a wireless operator listening at his instruments. He *may* hear nothing ; on the other hand——" He left his thought uncompleted, pondering evidently the practicability of a scheme that had suddenly occurred to him. " We want something to fire the train—to cause an explosion in his mind," he said, rather to himself than to us. " Let me see ! " He stood for a moment withdrawn in reflection. Then he turned to Forsyth. " Have you anything belonging to Miss Mansfield—anything that would strongly suggest her personality ? "

Forsyth blushed. " A photograph ? " he hazarded, diffidently.

" Excellent ! Let me have it ! "

FORSYTH went to his room and returned with a very good photograph of the girl. Her signature " Netta " was scrawled across the bottom.

Thompson took it with a grunt of approval and thrust it into his pocket.

" Now we'll all of us reinforce our susceptibility by another look through the screen," he said.

We did so, in turn. The auras emanating from each of us, in the room once more darkened to a half-light, were more vivid than ever. It was noticeable how Forsyth's rays straightened out in response to the eager activity of his mind.

" We'd better get those revolvers of ours," he said. " One never knows. He may show fight."

It was obvious that, to Forsyth, there was no question of Hassan's culpability—to him the problem was merely to demonstrate it ; but I by no means shared the confident certainty expressed in his tone. Apart from the doubtful chances of our experiment, we had not the slightest proof that the young man was implicated in the affair. However, Thompson curtly approved the suggestion, and we all slipped our revolvers into our pockets.

A moment later there was a step outside.

" Sit down and look normal ! " commanded Thompson. " Let me do the talking."

We had scarcely settled ourselves when there was a tap on the door, and, in response to Thompson's " Come in ! " the door opened and Ahmed Hassan entered.

In the renewed gloom, as he closed the door behind him, it was uncanny to see that dapper young Turk standing there, silhouetted against a sombre curtain which hung over the door, all unconscious of the aureole of coloured rays emanating from his body. I was struck by the peculiarly livid hue of the shifting play of the reds and yellows that flickered round him.

" In darkness ? " he said, gaily. " It's past the hour of the siesta ! "

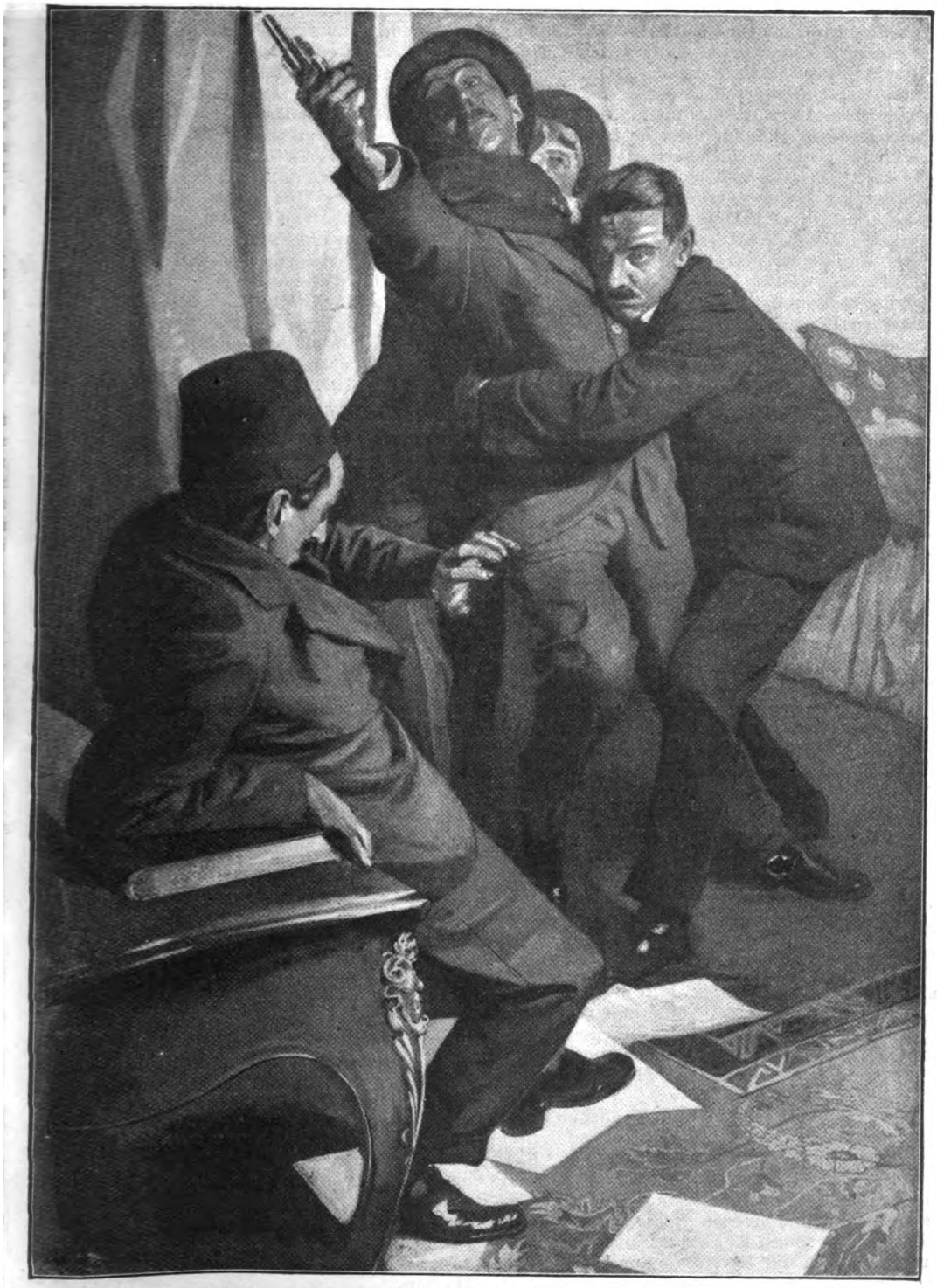
Thompson rose to greet him.

" Our friend Forsyth here has a headache," he explained.

Hassan made a gesture of polite commiseration.

" Poor Mr. Forsyth ! " he said. " Alas ! that I have no news for him." Even as he spoke, I saw his aura change to a violent red—and then go colourless. It was as though, by a quick effort of his will, he checked an instinctive thought, forced his inner mind to blankness. By contrast with the suave smile unmodified upon his countenance, the phenomenon was curiously striking. I heard Forsyth gasp at my side and I put my hand on his arm in a grip which held him silent. Blissfully unconscious of the thrilled interest with which we regarded him, Ahmed Hassan smiled round upon us with an expression that suggested a merely altruistic concern, a participation in our anxieties born only of good-natured courtesy. " Ah," he said, unctuously, " I myself would give much to see Miss Mansfield's charming face again."

At that moment, Thompson, who was standing fairly close to him, pulled out his handkerchief and blew his nose with factitious violence. Forsyth's photograph, dragged out with the handkerchief, fell face-downwards upon the floor, apparently unnoticed. Ahmed Hassan, all supple politeness, bent down to pick up the card, turned it over deftly—with the instinct of the practised intriguer—for a glance at the other side.



"With some difficulty we dragged our friend away and held him back. 'Don't be fool, Forsyth!' said Thompson, angrily. 'Killing a man won't help us.'"

There was perhaps a touch of superstition in his recognition of the features which smiled at him in such prompt answer to his wish. He certainly started as he straightened himself and stepped back—and the aureole about him leaped into livid colourings, which fluctuated around him like the lurid flames which flicker over the heart of a disturbed furnace.

On the instant—before he had uttered a word—my heart almost stopped with awed astonishment. What was that which built itself up like a ghost beside him? *Netta Mansfield!*—Netta Mansfield writhing, her head pulled back, across her mouth a cloth whose ends were held by somebody unseen, her wrists thrust forward and twisting in vain efforts to escape from—from two spectral hands that emanated from Ahmed Hassan's body! Yet his material hands still held the photograph at which he gazed. Was he for a moment involuntarily visualizing the guilt he was so anxious to conceal—a visualization in some way transmitted to our heightened faculties? I dug my nails into Forsyth's quivering arm, forcing him into immobility. In another instant the image had vanished.

AHMED HASSAN, his unsuspected aureole flickering wildly for yet a moment before its perturbation was quelled by that violent red flash of his will, stood smiling at us with a perfect self-command.

"The lady's photograph!" he said, handing it with a little bow to Thompson. "Let us take it as a happy omen!"

"It is more than that——!" broke in Forsyth, violently. My warning pressure silenced him.

"I do not quite understand——?" queried Hassan, turning to him with his suave smile—but I saw a quiver shoot through those fluctuating hues that enveloped him. "Have I the happiness to hear that Miss Mansfield is found?"

Thompson went behind him unobtrusively and locked the door. His glance sought mine as his hand went to his pocket. I imitated his action. The next moment he had side-stepped in front of Hassan, holding him covered with a revolver.

"She is—virtually!" said Thompson, with a grim smile. "Put those hands up! *Up!*"

Hassan's right hand, which had made an instinctive movement towards his pocket, shot up into the air in company with his left. He glanced round to Forsyth and me, to see us both upon our feet, revolvers levelled.

No man ever looked upon a queerer sight than those two figures confronting one another in that strange radiance of their auras—Thompson in a nimbus of steady, vivid blue light that played about the barrel of his threatening weapon—Hassan with both arms high above his head, the effulgence streaming from his finger-tips, enveloped in those spectral flames that flickered wildly through every variation of livid hue. I glanced at Forsyth by my side. His aura glowed with a singular intensity.

"What does this mean—this—this unwarrantable outrage?" stammered Hassan, fear and anger chasing each other across his face in curious consonance with the shifting play of light about him.

"It means that you have only one chance to leave this room alive, Mr. Hassan," replied Thompson, in a steady voice. "And that is to tell us where you have hidden Miss Mansfield?"

"I—I?" he stammered. "I have not seen Miss Mansfield since she was abducted."

"Since *you* abducted her," Thompson corrected him. "I know you haven't. You haven't dared. For all that, you have hidden her—until the search should be given up. Out with it! *We know!*" He stepped back, out of range of a possible snatch at his weapon, and joined us so that we confronted Hassan in a semicircle of levelled revolvers.

"I? I hide her?" laughed Hassan, scornfully, in a brave attempt at bluff. Once more there was that significant red flash. "I no more know where she is than you do!"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when, against the dark background of the curtain of the door, we all three saw a spectral picture of a house-front with a sign across it in large Greek characters.

"*Stavropoulos!*" ejaculated Forsyth. "Hotel Stavropoulos!"

Hassan started in amazement at the words. Once more, although of course ignorant of it, he had involuntarily visualized the fact he was anxious to conceal.

"The Hotel Stavropoulos!" repeated Thompson. "You have told us!"

Hassan uttered a hoarse scream of rage—a wild babble of Turkish words, where I only distinguished something like "*Shaitan!*"—and flung himself madly at Forsyth.

"*You* shall not have her!" he cried, his voice half-drowned by the deafening detonation of Forsyth's revolver.

He went over backwards to the floor, and lay motionless with blood trickling from his shoulder.

Thompson went to the window-shutters and flung them open. In the full daylight the phantasmagoria of those uncanny auras vanished like a dream. He glanced at Hassan.

"Look to him, Harford!" he said. He went quickly across to the telephone which

connected us with our own headquarters—a military line belonging to the Signal Service.

"Hallo! Hallo!" I heard his voice as I bent over the prostrate Hassan, pulling away the clothes from the shattered shoulder. "Hallo!—Put me through to Intelligence.—Hallo! Is that Intelligence?—Dr. Thompson speaking. Do you know the Hotel Stavropoulos?—What? All right. I'll wait." There was a pause. "What? In the Greek quarter? A small place? Right!—Will you search the house at once? I have reason to believe that Miss Mansfield is concealed there.—Good!—And I want some military police here immediately—to take over a prisoner. I'll explain later! Right!—You're sending a car straightaway to that Stavropoulos place? Good! Let us know the result, will you? Thanks." He rang off.

We lifted the unconscious Hassan to a sofa and bound up his wound.

Then we waited, the three of us, in a nervous tension when the minutes seemed like hours. It seemed an eternity before the telephone-bell startled us.

Forsyth sprang to the instrument.

"Yes—yes!" he assured it, eagerly. "What?" He swung round to us, his face lit up. "She was there!—She's found! Found!"

Then he went down on the floor in a faint.

THE rest is anti-climax. Hassan had, in fact, abducted the girl and tucked her away in the back bedroom of a fifth-rate hotel in a rookery of the Fanar quarter. You can guess the kind of shop. Aware that he was being watched, he had not dared to go near the place. As Thompson surmised, he was waiting until she was given up for lost or dead. An Allied Tribunal took a serious view of the case—but they had to hand him over to a Turkish prison, of course, and doubtless he is long since at liberty. However, I guess that doesn't worry Mrs. Forsyth in California.

"Some yarn!" commented one of the listeners. "But I still don't understand, doctor, how you could see those visions. It seems supernatural to me."

Dr. Harford glanced at his watch.

"I haven't time to go into the subtleties of telepathy," he said. "But listen! When I describe something to you—a snow-clad mountain, for instance—you *see* it, don't you, with your mind's eye? Normally, it is a clumsy process. The thought-vibrations in my brain set muscles into motion which propagate sound-vibrations in the air between me and you. Those sound-vibrations impinge on your auditory nerves and propagate nerve-vibrations to the receiving-centres in your brain and—somehow or other, no one can tell you how—you re-translate those back into my original picture. But suppose that you are in such a state of abnormal receptivity that those thought-vibrations—certainly not confined to that conglomerate of electrons in microscopically loose juxta-position which is my skull—reach your senses without the intermediary of the sound-vibrations. You will still build up the picture, and, if the suggestion is strong enough, you will build it up like an exteriorized vision—just as a hypnotic actually sees things which are suggested to him. In our case, our senses were heightened by the dicyanin, as I explained to you—Hassan had to make concrete in his mind the ideas he wished to conceal, he had to identify them, as it were—and we picked up his unconscious 'wireless' and visualized its contents. It's second sight, if you like, but there's nothing supernatural about it. Satisfied?"

"It's plausible, anyway," said the sceptic.

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR.

The statements made in this story about the Becquerel "N." rays, and their emanation—as described—from the human body, are scientifically correct.

The standard work upon the subject is Dr. Kilner's 'Human Atmosphere," published by Rebman, and afterwards by Heinemann (Medical Books), Ltd., in 1912 or 1913. A new edition was published last year by Kegan Paul, Ltd.

A box of apparatus such as described was put upon the market before the war by Baillière, Tindall, and Cox, the well-known medical publishers of Covent Garden, London. Another box, of slightly different type, was issued by Heinemann (Medical Books), Ltd. The dicyanin came from Germany, could not be renewed during the war, and is, I believe, still unprocurable.

Of course, for the purposes of the story I have taken an extreme case and extended it on lines for which scientific warranty is not lacking. For well-established instances, too numerous to quote, of the involuntary visualization of a telepathic impression—external perception is, says Taine, only a true hallucination—the reader is referred to Podmore and Gurney's "Phantasms of the Living."

THE KING AND THE PRINCE OF WALES

SOME INTIMATE AND AMUSING ANECDOTES OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

by

ERNEST BROOKS, O.B.E

Official Photographer to Their Majesties the King and Queen and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

I DO not remember, but I am told that it was at Windsor that I first saw the light of day, back in the early 'seventies. My father was employed on the Royal estate there, and as soon as I was old enough I was sent to the Royal School in Windsor Great Park.

It was whilst at school that I first came into contact with Royalty. The boys were enjoying a cricket match when H.R.H. Prince Christian came along, and after watching the game for a while he offered half a sovereign to the first boy who could "out" the batsman. To my intense joy it was I who succeeded in hitting the wicket, and a few minutes later I marched proudly up to receive the prize. It was not until several hours later that I discovered that I had been presented with a new farthing—and to this day I do not know whether it was an error or a practical joke.

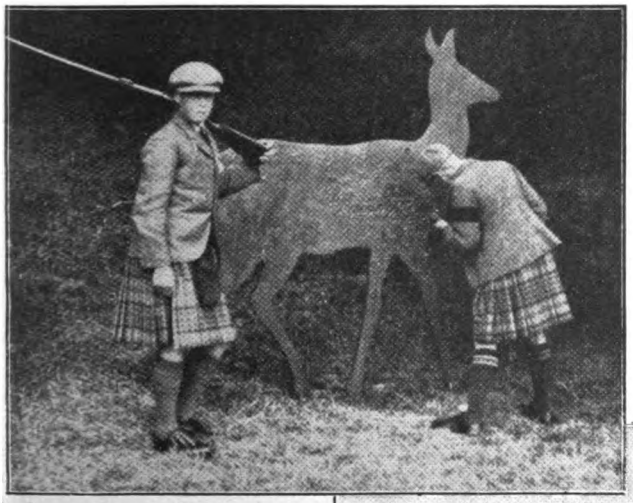
His Royal Highness was, however, one of the kindest men that ever lived, and many a time he and Prince Victor would meet us on the way home from school and tell us where we could find a brace of rabbits—usually behind a certain tree.

The years soon passed and brought me to the age when (in those days) scholastic activities came to an end. Before leaving school I was the lucky recipient of a beautiful Bible, which was presented to me personally by Queen Victoria. It is inscribed "For Diligence and Punctuality," and is still one of my most treasured possessions.

My first official position on the Royal estate was that of "donkey boy," and my duties consisted in looking after a very large mule given to Queen Victoria by Lord Kitchener on his return from Egypt in 1884, and which had originally belonged to the Mad Mahdi. At this time I often used to meet Queen Victoria and John Brown (her favourite attendant) on their way down from the Castle to Frogmore for breakfast, and they nearly always stopped and spoke to me. Her Majesty's interest in me seemed to deepen considerably after I mentioned the Bible she had given me. Besides acting as "donkey boy," I was also employed with my father on the Royal farm, but after two years of this my youthful spirit of adventure evidenced itself, and in 1892 I joined the Army. I served in the 3rd Dragoon Guards, and afterwards in the Glamorganshire Yeomanry (in which I had the unique experience of holding the Regimental Number 1 in "A" Squadron), and was privileged to ride in the Coronation procession of the late King Edward.

Shortly after this I ended my military career and obtained an appointment in the household of a lady of title, whose twin daughters were Maids of Honour to Queen Alexandra, and it was here that I obtained my first introduction to photography. It so happened that these ladies were the proud possessors of a camera each, and the development of their films was entrusted to me. To tell the truth, I made a mess not only of my

clothes and the room in which I worked, but of the films also. However, I had discovered a hobby which interested me intensely, and I immediately longed to possess a camera of my own. Unfortunately, the low state of my finances did not allow of a cash-down purchase, and the object of my desires was eventually obtained by a number of weekly payments of one shilling at the local chemist's.



The Prince of Wales and Prince Albert examining a target after shooting practice.

My first step into my new profession was to take a photograph of the cook, which, to my intense surprise, turned out quite well. Not long after this I chanced to read an advertisement in a newspaper to the effect that money could be made by taking photographs of well-known people or important events and forwarding them to a certain address, and I decided to try the experiment.

I therefore obtained the consent of a lady of title whom I knew to take a photograph of her, and forwarded a copy to the advertised address. About a fortnight later I received a letter saying that the picture had been placed with several newspapers, and enclosing a cheque for seven guineas. So astonished was I at the result of my first effort that I immediately decided to leave the work I was doing and confine my attention to taking photographs of people I knew at Windsor. The lady of the house was very enthusiastic at the idea, and offered to help me in any way she could—of which offer I was glad to avail myself in many directions afterwards.

So off I went to Windsor once again, and walked straight up to Cumberland Lodge to ask H.R.H. Prince Christian if I might "snap" the Lodge. Upon my mentioning the fact that I was an old Park School boy, he called out Princess Victoria and her sister Marie Louise, and the trio graciously consented to pose for me. The result was excellent, and I lost no time in forwarding it to the same address as before.

Once whilst I was wandering from point to point taking photographs of the Royal Household, a gentleman approached me

Queen Alexandra's favourite photograph of the late King Edward, taken on the occasion of His Majesty's last shoot.

and asked if I was taking pictures for a hobby or for the Press. I informed him that I was taking them for a newspaper and that I could obtain 10s. 6d. each for them.

Then, feeling rather communicative, I added: "There's one man here for whose photograph I could get at least five guineas."

"Oh! Who's that?" he asked.

"The Duke of Richmond," I replied, whereupon, after expressing surprise at the Duke's presence in the vicinity, he walked away. About ten minutes later he came back again and asked if I had been successful in obtaining a photograph of the Duke. Upon my replying in the negative he asked me if I would know the Duke when I saw him, to which I replied "Yes," with the utmost self-assurance. As he walked away I noticed a smile flickering upon his lips, and soon afterwards he returned for the third time accompanied by two ladies, and asked me at what distance my camera was focused.

"Seven yards, sir," I said.

"Very well, then, stand seven yards away and take that photograph of the Duke of Richmond," he replied.

The Young Princes' Pranks.

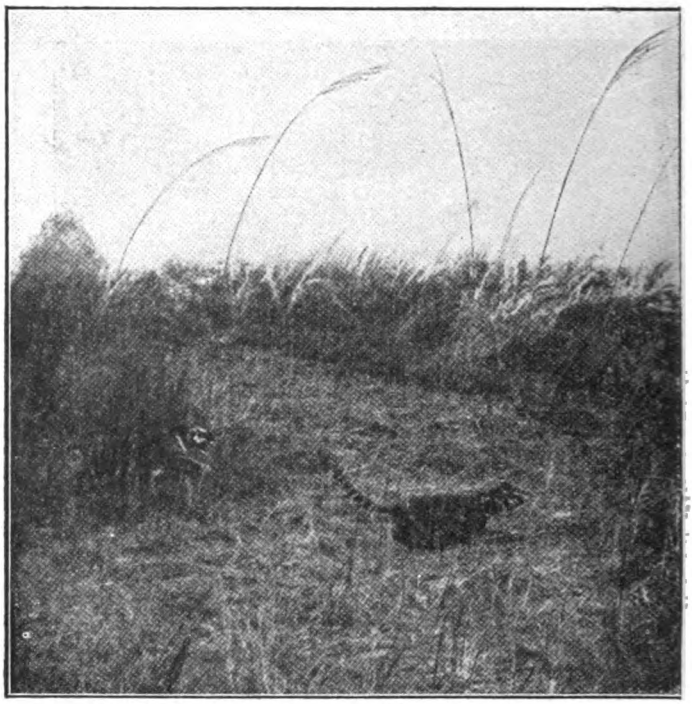
I led a very active existence, starting out early in the morning on a bicycle and calling on people I thought were interesting enough for the papers. I also used to follow the hunting with the Garth Hounds, where Prince Christian would introduce me to the various notabilities who attended the meets. In this way I became known to a large circle of people, and, in consequence, considerably increased my working field.

Whilst acting as official photographer at Court I was often called upon to give a cinematograph entertainment on a Pathéscope machine for the benefit of the Royal children. I remember that an evening of this description would never pass without my hearing the high-pitched voice of little Prince John demanding "The Runaway Horse," a film which never failed to amuse, principally, I think, because it depicted, among other things, a baby being thrown out of its perambulator! In youth the Royal sense of humour is apparently much the same as anybody else's.

In their younger days the Princes were very willing subjects for the photographer, although it was not considered politic to publish the more intimate photos of them. One reproduced on the previous page shows the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert examining a target after shooting practice.

Whilst on the subject of the young Princes, I call to mind an incident which occurred at Frogmore House just before I commenced my photographic activities there. The postman was on his rounds of the Castle one morning and happened to leave his hand-cart for a few moments. On returning he discovered, to his dismay, that a highly important mail-bag was missing. He searched high and low, but no trace of it could be found, and finally he was obliged to report the matter at the house. A systematic investigation was organized, and the missing bag was eventually discovered hidden in the laurels close by the spot where the hand-cart had stood. Further inquiry revealed the fact that the whole affair had been a boyish prank on the part of the young Princes, and to this day I still have a clear recollection of the noise which the present Prince of Wales made when he was "spanked" in his bath as a punishment!

Not many hours after the rumour of Princess Ena's engagement to King Alfonso



A remarkable photograph of the King tiger-shooting in India. few yards of

I was preparing for a trip to Spain—my first excursion abroad. I was no stranger to the Princess, as it had been my pleasure to accompany her on a ferreting expedition with my father some years previously—an incident which she graciously called to mind when introducing me to King Alfonso—and

His Majesty succeeded in stopping the two animals within a one another.

I had the exclusive privilege of obtaining the first posed photograph of the happy couple together. Later I went to the wedding, and was not very far away when the historical bomb explosion occurred.

Bluffing the German Officials.

Bluff is absolutely essential to a good Press photographer, and I have been obliged to make use of it on many occasions. Perhaps the most amusing of all was on the occasion of the annual manœuvres in Germany many years ago. I happened to lack the necessary passes, so obtained a wrapper from a bottle of " Harlene " hair restorer, with the large red seal and many signatures. Immediately the official on duty saw this he touched his helmet and allowed me to proceed, and a few minutes later I was in the presence of Prince Albert of Schleswig-Holstein, the only son of Prince Christian, whom I had known for many years. He mentioned my name to the Emperor, after which everything was plain sailing.

When I first accompanied the late King Edward and the German Emperor on a shooting expedition in Windsor Park, I decided to leave my camera behind me lest they should object to being photographed, but on succeeding occasions Prince Christian insisted upon a pictorial record being made, and I managed to secure some very valuable pictures.

King Edward's Last Shoot.

On one of these expeditions I had approached within a few yards of His Majesty when he turned round suddenly and said, " Why do you come so close ? " With due respect I explained that I wanted to photograph His Majesty's features as large as possible on the plate, whereupon he seemed quite satisfied with my explanation and told me to " Go ahead." As a result I obtained the picture reproduced on page 205, which Queen Alexandra considers to be a more life-like study than any other photograph of King Edward in existence.

Not long after this I was appointed to proceed with the Prince of Wales (now King) to South Africa, but owing to the death of King Edward, Prince George came to the throne, and the Duke of Connaught went instead.

We left England in the *Balmoral Castle*, and when we reached the Equator the ceremony of " crossing the line " afforded me an exceptional opportunity to obtain some unique photographs. The Duke received the Order of the Bloater, the Duchess the Tin-opener, and the Princess had the Bell-push. I was busily at work with my camera when the Duchess " spotted " me, and insisted that sentence should be passed upon me—this, by the way, after dozens of others had passed through the bath, and the water was somewhat thick! Instead of taking my ducking quietly I was foolish enough to attempt to pull one of Neptune's assistants into the bath, for which I was ducked six times instead of three, and the more I tried to yell for breathing space the longer they held me under. Great amusement was caused by my rapid evacuation of the scene of operations when I was eventually released.

The South African tour was a delightful experience, and I was particularly charmed by the scenery at the Victoria Falls, Zambezi, where, by the way, I unwittingly committed a breach of etiquette by presenting the dusky King Lewanika with a silk hat, which I had brought out from England for official functions and never used.

King George and the Tigers.

My next appointment was that of Official Photographer on the tour of Their Majesties the King and Queen to India, where, in addition to the usual photographs of the gorgeous State functions, I succeeded in obtaining a number of exceptional pictures of tiger shooting in the jungle. We left the Royal train at about midday and travelled by car over a specially-made road. We had a little excitement on the way. A leopard charged the headlights of one of the cars, and, I fear, came off rather badly, for he slunk away into the undergrowth, looking a sorry sight, obviously determined not to repeat the experiment.

To ensure that His Majesty should enjoy the maximum of sport in the short time at his disposal, the Maharajah arranged that a bullock should be tied up to a tree near the river. This, of course, attracted all the tigers for miles around, and after they had gorged themselves they fell asleep in the long grass by the riverside. A huge circle of eight hundred elephants—about half a mile in diameter—was then formed, and the shikarees proceeded to work to stir up the sleeping beasts. As the tigers were about to break cover, I endeavoured to get as near to His Majesty as possible, in the hope of obtaining a snapshot of him in the act of firing. Judge of my amazement when I suddenly heard His Majesty exclaim, "Oh, get out of the way, man!" I noticed, however, that his tone was jocular, and that there was a smile upon his face. Before I had time to obey the King's command two male tigers suddenly sprang out into a small open space, and His Majesty with two splendid shots stopped them both, within ten yards of one another. As the report of the second shot rang out, my shutter clicked—and I had taken the photograph reproduced on pages 206 and 207—which I consider to be one of my most remarkable pictures.

An interesting photograph of the Prince of Wales walking with Col. Clive Wigram a few days previous to his investiture.

The King's Joke.

His Majesty has a very keen sense of humour, and I remember on one occasion he was highly delighted because he had persuaded his private hairdresser (whom, for the purposes of this story, I will call X.) to join the party on one of the tiger-shooting expeditions. Now X. had rather an excitable temperament, and as we were moving through the long grass an animal darted right in front of the leading elephant.

"See that tiger, X.?" shouted the King.

"Yes, your Majesty," came the polite reply.

"No, you didn't. That was a deer," answered the King, amidst much laughter.

Upon my return from the Indian tour I opened a little business in the Buckingham Palace Road, where I was honoured with several visits from members of the Royal Family.

I was fortunate enough to have the services of the daughter of a well-known M.P. as receptionist, and one day whilst I was at work in the dark-room beneath the studio she came down to inform me that two boys and a girl were waiting upstairs to see me, and that they were in a great hurry. I had just told her to inform them that I would not be long, when I heard their footsteps descending the stairs, and I recognized the voices of the Prince of Wales, Princess Mary, and Prince Albert. They had come to see the results of the pictures I had taken of the Prince's Investiture at Carnarvon.

Princess Mary in her Confirmation dress.

A few days previous to the Investiture, by the way, I took several snapshots of the Prince enjoying his early morning walk in company with Col. Wigram, one of which illustrates this article. For the exclusive right to reproduce this one of the London daily papers offered me a huge sum of money, but I was not allowed to give any one journal preferential treatment, and had to refuse it.

In those days the Prince hated the sight of a camera or of a newspaper reporter, but experience has changed his opinion, as will be seen from the recent pictorial records of his Colonial tour.

Princess Mary is exceptionally pleasing to photograph. Besides possessing a natural grace of pose, she always seems so anxious to help the photographer in every possible way, and her speaking voice is as sweet as her disposition. Incidentally, I do not think it is generally known that Her Royal Highness is a very accomplished pianist.

I have had the honour of photographing Princess Mary on several occasions, among the most momentous of which was the day of her confirmation, when I took my camera into her private room immediately before she proceeded to the Buckingham Palace chapel. This photograph has not been reproduced previously.

The King and Fashions.

The other portrait of Her Royal Highness which accompanies this article is of considerable interest in view of the fact that it reveals something of the King's tastes in regard to feminine fashions. Upon seeing the first print His Majesty raised an objection to the width of the panniers on either side of the

The Queen's favourite portrait of Princess Mary. Note the alterations in the pannier effect, which were carried out at the King's request.

Princess's frock, and ordered me to have them taken out on the negative. Anxious not to offend Her Royal Highness, I made a compromise by painting out a portion of the offending drapery, but this was not sufficient for His Majesty, and a second alteration had to be made before he was satisfied. A close inspection of the photograph will reveal the original outlines of the frock. This, by the way, is the Queen's favourite portrait of Princess Mary.

Another interesting correction, made by the King personally, is revealed on the Royal Christmas-card for 1913. I submitted a proof to His Majesty with the printed title "Guards' Review, April, 1913," but he ordered it to be changed to "Review of Brigade of Guards, Hyde Park, April, 1913." The inscription reproduced is in the King's own handwriting.

A Royal Object-Lesson in Economy.

In private life the Royal Family live very simply, and when he is out of the public eye His Majesty often sacrifices appearance for comfort. Indeed, whilst in conversation with him not long ago I noticed that one of the shoes he was wearing was adorned with a patch! Another point of interest is that His Majesty attributes his good health largely to his partiality to cocoa and Benger's Food.

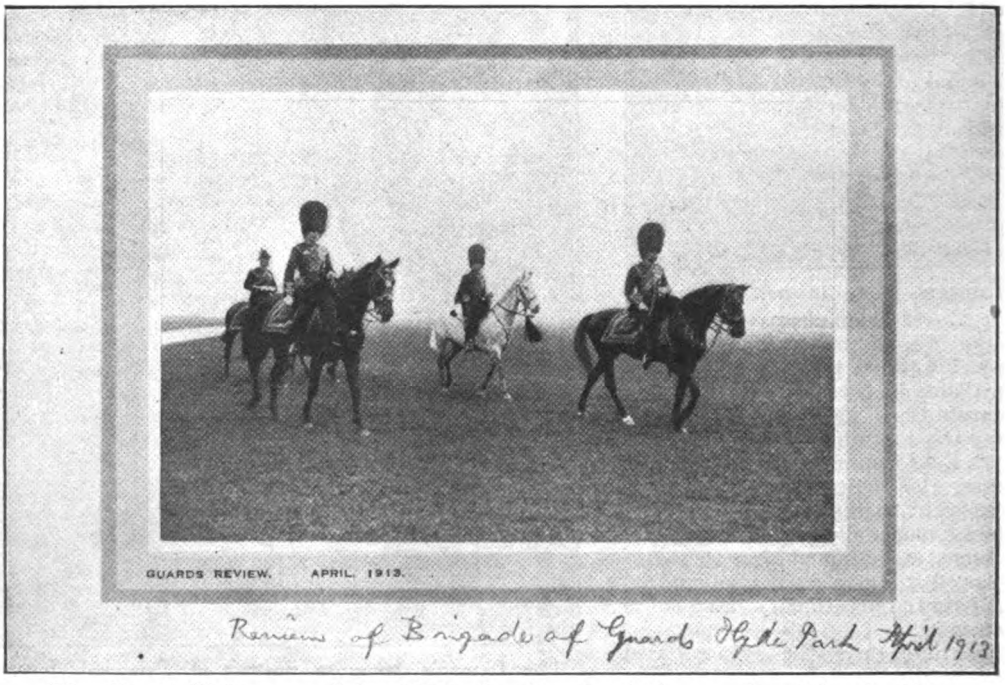
The King is extremely particular in the matter of punctuality. I remember on one occasion I had been ordered to attend at Buckingham Palace to photograph Their Majesties at ten minutes to twelve. The King had been inspecting some troops, and some unavoidable delay made him an hour late. After considerable discussion it was decided that I was to take the photograph, and I was instructed to proceed as quickly as possible.

I focused my camera as rapidly as I could, but found that the King was not quite in the best position.

"Would your Majesty mind coming a little more this way?" I asked, in my best professional tone.

The King complied with my wish; then, apparently as an after-thought, he leaned right forward and exclaimed: "Don't talk so much, man—get on with it!"

Next came the war, and after a certain amount of service at home I volunteered to go on the *Queen Elizabeth* as Official Photographer in the Dardanelles. Later I proceeded to Gallipoli and Salonica, and thence to France, and it need hardly be said that I had sufficient experiences to fill a book. However, space will not permit me to go into details, and I must content myself by saying that not only did I obtain a number of remarkable photographs (some of which



The Royal Christmas-card for 1913, the title of which was altered by the King personally. The inscription is in His Majesty's own handwriting.

nearly cost me my life), but I also had the pleasure of meeting many famous people whilst at G.H.Q., including Sir Douglas Haig, Sir William Orpen (who presented me with a portrait of myself, reproduced below), and many others.

The Prince as a Machine-Gunner.

I did not get many opportunities to photograph the Prince of Wales whilst in France, and I am afraid I cannot tell any new anecdotes regarding His Royal Highness n the trenches. It may, however, come as a surprise to some people to learn that upon more than one occasion the Prince has flown over the Austrian lines and poured machine-gun fire into the enemy's trenches.

After the war, my next official appointment was to accompany His Royal Highness on his Colonial tour, my pictorial records of which were published all over the world. The history of the tour itself is also well known, so that I need only confine myself to a few more intimate details which may enable readers to view events and personalities from a new angle.

A pencil portrait of the Author, by Major Sir Wm. Orpen.

The Mishap to the Royal Train.

One of the outstanding incidents of the tour was the accident to the Royal train which occurred near Perth, Western Australia. When it took place I happened to be dozing in a corner seat. A sudden jolt awakened me, and a moment later I heard somebody exclaim, " My God ! The Prince's coach has overturned." Knowing from experience that the photographer who is always keenly on the alert for pictures often has his leg pulled, I refused to believe this statement, especially in view of the fact that our own coach was unaffected. Upon discovering that such was really the case, however, and having ascertained that the Prince was unhurt, my next thought was to fetch my camera. To my annoyance I suddenly remembered that I had already exposed every plate I had loaded, so I hastened into the improvised dark-room, slipped in two fresh plates, and hurried out on to the line just in time to find the Prince climbing out of his carriage. I " snapped " him immediately, and felt highly elated at having procured such an historical picture. A few minutes later I caught His Royal Highness standing beside the wreckage with a lighted cigarette and helping to remove the luggage—and I snapped him again.

It was not until an hour later that I realized, to my horror, that I had not reversed the dark-slide in my camera, and that the two pictures had been taken on the same plate ! I obtained quite a number of good photographs of the accident afterwards, but of course none of them was really so valuable as that first one would have been. To think that I, with all my experience, should, in my excitement, make a mistake that the veriest amateur might have avoided ! I kicked myself !

The Prince's Jazz Band.

Whilst travelling in the Royal train the Prince was very fond of organizing " rags," and His Royal Highness's own private jazz band (in which the Prince was a highly skilled head-drummer and Admiral Halsey

played the tin whistle) had to be heard to be believed.

The Prince, by the way, is also an able player on the bagpipes, and, on occasions, has even gone so far as to write poetry.

The verses which he wrote on the occasion of his crossing the line are printed on this page.

Once free from the fetters of formality, the Prince becomes an overgrown schoolboy, full of fun and mischief, and ever smiling. When he attended a dance the conductors of the various orchestras would almost invariably seem to understand the Prince's mood, making the "duty" dances as brief as possible, and increasing the length of those His Royal Highness seemed to be enjoying. The Prince always chose his own partners, and cared nothing about their social position so long as they were pleasant girls and —in this he was more particular—about his own height. At one "jazz" dance at which I was present the Prince caused considerable amusement by suddenly leaving the floor and joining the orchestra, where he changed places with the head-drummer and gave a truly remarkable performance on the rattles, cymbals, squeakers, and other impedimenta which go to the making of jazz.

On board ship, too, whenever the opportunity presented itself, His Royal Highness would invariably slip away and join the "snotties" (midshipmen), with whom he engaged in all kinds of amusing horseplay.

I call to mind that on crossing the line, when the Prince had to go through the usual "initiation" ceremony and ducking, he threatened me that I should have to go through it as well, as he contended that nobody would take my word that I had crossed the line before unless I could show some proof. Right up to the last minute I feared that the Prince would play some prank upon me and arrange for me to be "ducked" also, but I managed to escape after all.

Whilst on board the *Renown* I took a photograph of the Prince in his bath, which was published in the London papers. Some time later His Royal Highness sent for me and in a very kindly way explained that the King had objected to its publication, and had considered it an indiscretion on my part. I greatly appreciated the sympathetic manner in which I was reprimanded, and it made me feel all the more regretful that I had caused the King displeasure.

King Neptune, I am proud to wear
This honourable and handsome collar;*
Although from all reports I hear
There's still a good deal more to foller.

I'm glad to meet your charming wife,
And all the members of your Court;
From all I've seen I'll bet my life
That Amphitrite's quite a sport.

I hear you're handing out some dope
To each expectant frightened lad,
Made up of pills and shaving soap.
Why, is not that just quite too bad?

I hear your Bears—say! what a noise!
They're hungry to begin the baiting.
I know I'm for it, King; so, boys,
Don't let me keep the party waiting!

* This should read "order," but I can't make it rhyme.—E. P.

Verses composed by the Prince when "crossing the line."

How the Prince Took to Chewing Gum.

The Prince, by the way, is now an habitual "gum-chewer." It came about in this way. We were on a shooting expedition round about Qu'appelle Lakes, Regina, and the air was so cold that the guns were impossible to hold, and it was finally decided to abandon operations. The Royal train was telegraphed for, and we had an hour and a half to wait until its arrival. To pass the time the Prince strolled into a little local store, and seeing some Wrigley's Chewing Gum displayed upon the counter, he purchased a packet. Since then he has taken a great liking to it, and, particularly when playing polo or some other sport, he will often be seen chewing like a full-blooded American.

I do not know whether it is generally known how the famous "Smiling Prince" picture was taken. We had just entered a prohibition area, and I was ready to take a photograph of the Prince signing the visitors' book, when I said to a man who was standing beside me, "Say something to make him laugh."

The latter immediately called out, "Be careful, sir—you're signing the pledge!" At which the Prince lifted his head and revealed a beautiful smile. My shutter clicked, and I had taken the most popular picture of the Prince ever published.

One of the greatest difficulties we had to contend with on tour was the number of people who attempted to associate themselves with the Prince in some way or another for the sake of self-advertisement. A well-known film star offered me the sum

of a thousand dollars if I would take a picture of her talking to the Prince. She planned to meet him on his return from golf, to speak to him without introduction, and to walk alongside him—at which moment I was to jump out with my camera. The monetary offer was

An unconventional snapshot of the Prince shaving in his camp on the Nipigon River, Canada.

"Our Smiling Prince," the most popular portrait of all.

very tempting, and I must admit that I nearly gave in, but when the actual moment arrived for the taking of the picture I realized how offended the Prince might be, so I backed out.

A Clever Ruse.

Needless to say, all sorts and conditions of people wanted to be photographed with the Prince. In one town we visited, after the official reception was over, the Mayor asked the Prince if he would do him the honour of stepping into his private house and allowing him to present his family to him. The Prince willingly acquiesced, and the Mayor introduced three ladies to him, who he said were his wife, his daughter, and his niece. After a few minutes' conversation it was suggested that a photograph might be taken to commemorate the Prince's visit, and His Royal Highness having graciously assented, the picture was obtained.

Later one of the party asked Admiral Halsey if he knew the identity of the lady standing next to the Prince, and he told him that he understood her to be the Mayor's niece.

"As a matter of fact," he said, "that's Mrs. Charlie Chaplin, the cinema star."

Investigation proved that he was right. The whole thing had been a put-up job, and the group had been so arranged that the figures of the Prince and the film star could be cut out and distributed broadcast. It was one of the cleverest publicity "stunts" ever conceived, and it taught me a lesson to be very careful of the identity of the people whom I photographed in company with the Prince.

At the end of the tour the Prince made me one or two beautiful presents, among which was a signed photograph of himself.

His cheery manner and his entire lack of "side" have already endeared him to the hearts of the public, and as one of those who have been in personal contact with him for many years I can say that he thoroughly deserves his popularity.

As I once heard it said of him in America: "He's a two hundred per cent. man—a man's man and a ladies' man, too."

The MOTH and the STAR

by GILBERT FRANKAU

ILLUSTRATED BY H·ELCOCK

I.

THE principal curse of all artistic endeavour to secure financial success is that the successful artist requires not only an artistic but a business sense. More especially does this principle apply to the least of all the arts—acting. Because, from that welter of thwarted ambition, diseased vanities, and personal jealousy which is the British stage, only the hardest-headed, hardest-hearted ever emerge to London prominence. And, once emerged, your prominent actor or actress must needs devote at least two-thirds of his or her time to the suppression of other hard-headed, hard-hearted mummers—all eager for West-end applause and West-end money.

The law of our stage, therefore, is the law of the primeval jungle, the law of "big business," the law of all competitive communities: death (otherwise an ill-paid provincial engagement) to the weak, the poor, and such-as-have-no-influence. Which may or may not be the reason for the decay of British acting in the West-end of London.

This fight-to-a-finish struggle, however, is not carried on in the open. Openly, the fighters compliment one another, stroke one another, purr over one another. An illusion of good manners, peculiar to the profession, an illusion of hearty good-will, peculiar to the professional, cloaks the snarling, backbiting tussle from all save the astutest eye.

Nevertheless, even in this dark jungle of hatred and jealousy, Love—as a white flower in black swamp-lands—comes occasionally to bloom. Hear now the love-story of Sheila Tremayne; and if the flower be a little less white than your own imaginings, a little stained of petal and calyx, be lenient in your appraisement, remembering the soil wherefrom it grew.

II.

MARCIA MEREDITH was a good wife, a mediocre actress, a magnificent business-woman, and—above all things—a West-end "star." The gaining of that star-dom had cost her forty-five years of struggle and most of her soul. To the public she remained a ripe thirty, soulful and temperamental, the shimmering, passionate Marcia Meredith of "Love's Victim," "Mrs. Deerson's Marriage," and other dramatic entertainments too trivial for the chronicling; to the sophisticated eyes of "the profession" she stood for the ultimate jungle-product—a tigress ready with tongue and tooth and claw to defend her theatrical lair against any who might seek to invade it.

Vague hints of this tigerishness, which

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lurked, always ready to pounce, behind the dark-lashed dark-green eyes of the leading lady, had reached Sheila Tremayne before she accepted the small part of Doris Gray in Marcia's new production. But Sheila had only laughed at her informant. The part was a good one, well within her powers; it gave her access for the first time to the "West-end." Nothing else—not even tigresses—mattered.

And yet, even at the first reading of the play to the company, Sheila had sensed a vague antagonism. Whenever the producer read out a line of Doris Gray's it seemed to Sheila, watching the actor-manageress, as though a frown creased Miss Meredith's broad, over-whitened forehead, as though the ugly hands twitched, the black hair under the over-feathered hat tossed impatiently.

In after years Sheila Tremayne would have *known* the thoughts behind that over-whitened forehead; would have almost heard the thin lips mutter to themselves, "I oughtn't to have engaged this girl. She's too attractive. She'll make the part too prominent. *I* shall suffer."

For Sheila Tremayne, by instinct, was also of the jungle! She, also, had it in her to become the star. A psychologist—and Marcia Meredith had needed psychology in *her* fight for stardom—would have told this from Sheila's face, from her hands, from the very artificiality with which she spoke.

A girl's face was Sheila's. Almost ideal for the footlights. A face essentially virgin, and one that would preserve its illusion of virginity. Stage-virginity, be it understood: dark-blue eyed, high foreheaded under a nimbus of real gold hair, straight-nosed, round-cheeked, small-eared. A face almost devoid of character, except for the full lips and the prominent resolute chin. It was that chin which first affrighted Marcia Meredith; that, and the long-fingered, broad-palmed hands which betokened the needful minimum of art backed by the needful maximum of business drive.

So for a full week Miss Meredith called Miss Tremayne "her dear child"—and instructed author and producer (meek men both, their self-determination rotted by many years of the footlights) to cut as many of Doris Gray's lines as might be possible. And at the end of that week, Chance (who plays his part behind the wings) decreed that Lucien Winthrop, the leading boy, should break an arm while mumming for the movies, and brought Basil Harrington in his stead.

Everything that was best in Sheila Tremayne, all the tenderness which could just redeem her acting of "girl" parts from the mediocre, fell crazily to loving Basil Harrington, from the first moment her dark-blue eyes visioned him shaking hands with Marcia Meredith. He was the ideal stage-lover, well over six foot, with light-brown crinkly hair, nice eyes, the hands and feet of a gentleman, and that rarity among stage-folk—a voice. Immediately she adored him, and he—in so far as modern young men are capable of adoration—reciprocated. That is to say, he was sufficiently aware of her to turn his head, ever so slightly, from the shake-hands with Marcia towards the slim tall girl in the russet tailor-made who had just repeated her line:—

"But I love him, Mrs. Masterson, I love him. Won't you let him come to me?"

III.

THAT line of Doris Gray's is spoken in the third act of Paul Derrick's "great romantic comedy, Devotion"; of which comedy it is necessary for your understanding to give at least an outline.

Understand, then, that the play, having been written specially to the order of Marcia Meredith, contains only one real part—Mrs. Masterson. The entire comedy is a vehicle for the exploitation, re-exploitation, and super-exploitation of Mrs. Masterson's (Marcia Meredith's) moods, clothes, figure, voice, gestures, arms, eyebrows, jewellery, and "temperament." Around these, and not around any specific dramatic idea, revolve—as pale moonlets around a star—the minor characters.

But in the third and last act of "Devotion" there occurs (doubtless by an oversight of the author's) one real dramatic moment. The scene is Mrs. Masterson's boudoir. She, by a super-effort of clothes, voice, gestures, eyebrows, and temperament, has succeeded in luring Cyprian Olphert (Basil Harrington) from his *fiancée*, Doris Gray. Doris Gray, therefore—who, by a stage coincidence, is staying with her rival—arraying herself in her most becoming garment, follows Cyprian to the boudoir, pleads with Mrs. Masterson, and finally triumphs over the entanglement. Thereafter, Mrs. Masterson makes things up with her own legitimate husband; and the curtain falls and is raised many times to display Marcia Meredith bowing her thanks to a delighted audience.

By the twelfth day of rehearsals, when the last act had begun to shape itself, it became apparent to Marcia Meredith—as it is doubtless apparent to the reader—that a really fine performance of Doris Gray by Sheila Tremayne might conceivably involve a considerable amount of publicity, to say nothing of insistent curtain-calls, for that young actress. By the fourteenth day, when it became necessary to consider the dresses for the minor characters (Marcia's clothes,

needless to say, had been designed weeks since by Monsieur Lépine of Paris, London, and New York), the leading lady's cooed "My dear child" had been replaced by "Miss Tremayne," a "Miss Tremayne" so perfectly polite as to be absolutely tigrine.

IV.

"AND how is the frock for the last act, Miss Tremayne?" asked Basil Harrington.

"Oh, not bad," smiled the girl.

They were lunching together, not for the first time, at Gustave's in Soho—a dark little, intimate little restaurant of cheap prices and flamboyant omelettes, not two hundred yards away from the theatre.

"Really nice?" went on the boy in his thrilling voice. "Or only so-so?"

"You'll see at the dress-rehearsal."

"Can't you describe it to me?" He leaned forward artlessly, and his brown eyes darted admiration at Sheila.

"It's black silk," she admitted. "Quite simple, of course. They can't afford to spend any money on *my* clothes."

'Black!" His intuition caught at the disappointment she was trying to hide from him. 'But surely that isn't right for the character? Miss Meredith might wear black. You ought to be in something girlish. Pale pink? Pale blue? And besides"—he hesitated, aware of disloyalty to his employer—'isn't Doris Gray supposed to be a millionaire's daughter?"

"She is," snapped Sheila, "but she'll look like—like a charity orphan."

"But why——" began Basil; and in that moment Sheila *knew*.

She had not known before, only surmised—vaguely through long lonely evenings in her tiny flat—the influence at work against her. Young to the jungle of stageland, it had needed the mating fervour to sharpen her instincts of self-protection. But now both mating fervour and defensive instinct were fully aroused.

"Does it matter?" she said.

'*I* think it matters frightfully," retorted the boy, "not only to the play, but to you. You see, the public nowadays are funny. They insist on our being well-dressed. You've no idea what *my* tailor's bill is."

"Men have such an advantage, paying for their own clothes."

"I can't see that—we don't get any bigger salaries for dressing ourselves."

"But you can wear more or less what you like," said Sheila.

Somehow or other—every successful artist knows that there is such a moment—realization of her dual personality was being born in the girl. Self-knowledge added itself to the knowledge of Marcia Meredith. She grew furiously conscious of two Sheilas: the one tender and girlish, who could play Doris Gray to the life, who could surrender herself, would surrender herself, without question to the adorable boy with the crinkly hair and the clean-shaven lips; the other a hard-headed, hard-hearted, unwomanly little person who meant to do battle with tooth and claw for success.

Curiously enough, even the hard-hearted, hard-headed Sheila loved Basil Harrington. "He," she said to herself, "doesn't realize that we are in the jungle. He's too *nice*. I must fight for us both."

"Time we were getting back to rehearsal," suggested the boy, paying his bill. She powdered her nose, pulled down her veil, and followed him into the sunshine.

All the two hundred yards down Shaftesbury Avenue Sheila's new instinct was at work. She said to herself, "It's in my own hands. It's always in our hands once we're 'on.' The producer can't interfere with me. Miss Meredith can't interfere. Once the curtain goes up on the first night, the issue rests between me and the public. Do the public really care for clothes as much as Basil thinks?"

Entering the stage-door, looking in the glass cage to see if there were any letters for either of them, scurrying along the white-washed passage, down the stone steps on to the half-lit stage, Sheila's instinct still functioned. Instinct urged, "This is enemy territory. Tread softly. Speak softly. Veil your voice. Veil the purpose in your eyes. Pretend! Pretend! Pretend!"

"Beginners for Act Three!" called the stage-manager, and the "beginners," Mrs. Masterson's husband and Mrs. Masterson's maid, took up their positions; started in to stumble through their lines.

Sheila found herself a packing-case in the wings, sat down, and began to study her part. But her mind was not on the typewritten words; her mind was hovering about the auditorium, empty save for Mr. Peaston, the producer, and the cleaners, sweeping carpets against the evening performance. In ten days—thought Sheila—those stalls, those boxes, that pit, gallery, and dress-circle will be full of eyes. And every eye will see Doris Gray looking like a charity orphan.

She forced herself to study. "But I love him, Mrs. Masterson. Won't you let him come to me?" And quite suddenly Sheila Tremayne wished that the stage issue between herself and Marcia Meredith had been the real issue. "That," she thought, "would be a fight worth fighting." (For this is yet another curse of the acting art, that anyone with a due sense of values—and that sense, too, was being born in Sheila—must realize its utter futility.)

"He leaned forward artlessly, and his brown eyes darted admiration at Sheila."

A shadow blurred the typescript; and, lifting her head, she saw her antagonist.

"Hard at work, Miss Tremayne?" purred Marcia Meredith, regal if a trifle middle-aged in ospreys and sables.

"I'm afraid I'm a terribly slow 'study,'" prevaricated Sheila.

"Then I've good news for you," went on the elder woman. "You know that last speech of yours, the one that begins 'But I love him.' Well, Mr. Peaston and myself have been talking it over, and we both think it too long. It holds up the action. Don't you think so?"

A protest rose to Sheila's lips, was forced down. The speech in question was the climax of her part. To cut it would make Doris Gray a colourless nonentity.

"The author agrees with us. So, if *you* don't mind" ("as if she'd *dare* mind," thought Marcia), "we're going to take out a few lines of it. If you'll give me your part, I'll show you just where the cuts come."

The actor-manageress took the typescript Sheila proffered; took a gold pencil from her gold bag, and carefully excised all but the first two and last three lines of the speech.

"*My* cue," she said, "is not altered."

"No, of course not," murmured the girl, and then, remembering her new self, she smiled, "I think it's a great improvement, Miss Meredith."

"I'm glad you don't mind," said a disarmed Marcia. "Some people are so silly about cuts. As if anything or any of us matter except the play."

She stood chatting amicably for a moment. She could afford to be amicable now. Sheila Tremayne, in Doris Gray's black silk frock, speaking Doris Gray's attenuated lines, could hardly cast the shadow of an eclipse on the stardom of Mrs. Masterson.

"Oh, and I do hope you didn't think the dress we chose for the last act *too* simple. Miss Tremayne," said the actor-manageress,

"I think it simply adorable, Miss Meredith," cooed the girl who was learning her jungle laws.

A moment later, with a rustle of charmeuse and a jingle of golden accoutrements, Marcia tripped away towards the "prompt" side—there, with Basil Harrington, to await her cue. But all that dreary rehearsal afternoon, and all the dreary rehearsal afternoons which followed, Sheila Tremayne—the tender, girlish Sheila—cried those bitter tears which never rise to the eye; and all that dreary home evening, and all the dreary home evenings which followed, Sheila Tremayne, the hard-hearted, hard-headed Sheila, worked on the full speech as it was before it had been cut to colourlessness, and totted up her tiny balance in the Post Office Savings Bank.

V.

"MONSIEUR, there is a young lady to see you."

"What young lady?" Monsieur Lépine, of Paris, London, and New York, lifted a brilliantly brilliantined head and stared, black-eyed, across the ormolu desk of his lavishly-furnished private office at the pert secretary who had interrupted his sartorial musings.

"A young lady from the Piccadilly Theatre."

"Her name?"

"Miss Tremayne. Miss Sheila Tremayne."

"I do not know a Miss Tremayne of the Piccadilly Theatre. Of the Piccadilly Theatre, I only know Miss Meredith. And of her I know too much. If the Tremayne want to buy any clothes, let Miss Jameson attend to her."

The secretary hesitated.

"The young lady won't see anyone but yourself, Monsieur. She says it is about a frock for to-morrow's performance of 'Devotion.'"

"'Devotion!' 'Devotion!' I am tired of 'Devotion.' I am tired of stage people." The dressmaker twirled a black moustache. "The Meredith woman has bothered me enough already."

Nevertheless, after further protest, he consented to leave his office, and strode into the showrooms below.

There is nothing shoppy about Lépine's London showrooms. The effect, artfully contrived to discourage the economically minded, is midway between that of a drawing-room and a picture gallery; wall-colour a pale yellow; chairs upholstered in orange brocade; ceiling black; floor parquet; mannequins' stage—which occupies the entire south wall—velvet-curtained and mysterious as a palmist's cave.

Sheila, rising nervously from one of the brocaded chairs, was aware of a tallish foreigner in black cut-away coat, flower at buttonhole, whose eyes seemed to cheapen the inexpensive tailor-made, the inexpensive hat she wore by at least five guineas.

"Mademoiselle Tremayne?" he queried.

"Of the Piccadilly Theatre," smiled Sheila. "I want your help, Monsieur Lépine. I want your advice."

"*Tiens!*" retorted the Frenchman. "So you want my advice. That is more than most English actresses want. They are fools, your English actresses. They think they know everything. In Paris it is different. There, they realize that I, too, am an artist." He altered his tone. "You want some frocks, eh?"

"I only want one frock," stammered Sheila. "And I—I don't know whether I can afford it."

"For the stage?"

"Yes, for to-morrow night. It"—the girl's voice dropped—"it's rather a secret, Monsieur Lépine."

"A secret!" The man's eyes twinkled. "I do not make secret frocks." He swished away the secretary, who had been listening intently, and went on; "What part do you take in the play, Mademoiselle? The young lady, eh? I thought so. I remember you, once, at rehearsal, when I came to see Miss Meredith. Why did the management not send you to me at once? Now, we must find a model. There is no time to make. And models are not cheap, these days."

Sheila's dark-blue eyes veiled themselves under long lashes. "Supposing the management knew nothing about my coming to you, Monsieur, would that make a difference?"

Said the Frenchman, after a perceptible pause: "Mademoiselle, I, too, am an artist. You spoke of a secret. To me it is no secret. Let me tell you. Miss Meredith is jealous of you; therefore she send you to a cheap dressmaker. Is it not so?"

"Well——" began the girl.

"Do not interrupt. I have not been in this business twenty years for nothing. I know these—how do you call them?—stars. One day, you also will be a star. Then you will do precisely as Miss Meredith." He altered his tone. "This dress—you pay for it yourself?"

"If I can," said Sheila, a little taken aback by the rapidity of the Frenchman's intuition.

"And Miss Meredith, when she find out, what happen to you? What happen to me, Lépine? I tell you—you get the sack—and I—I make no more clothes for Miss Meredith."

"But she needn't know *you* made the dress. I would promise not to tell a soul."

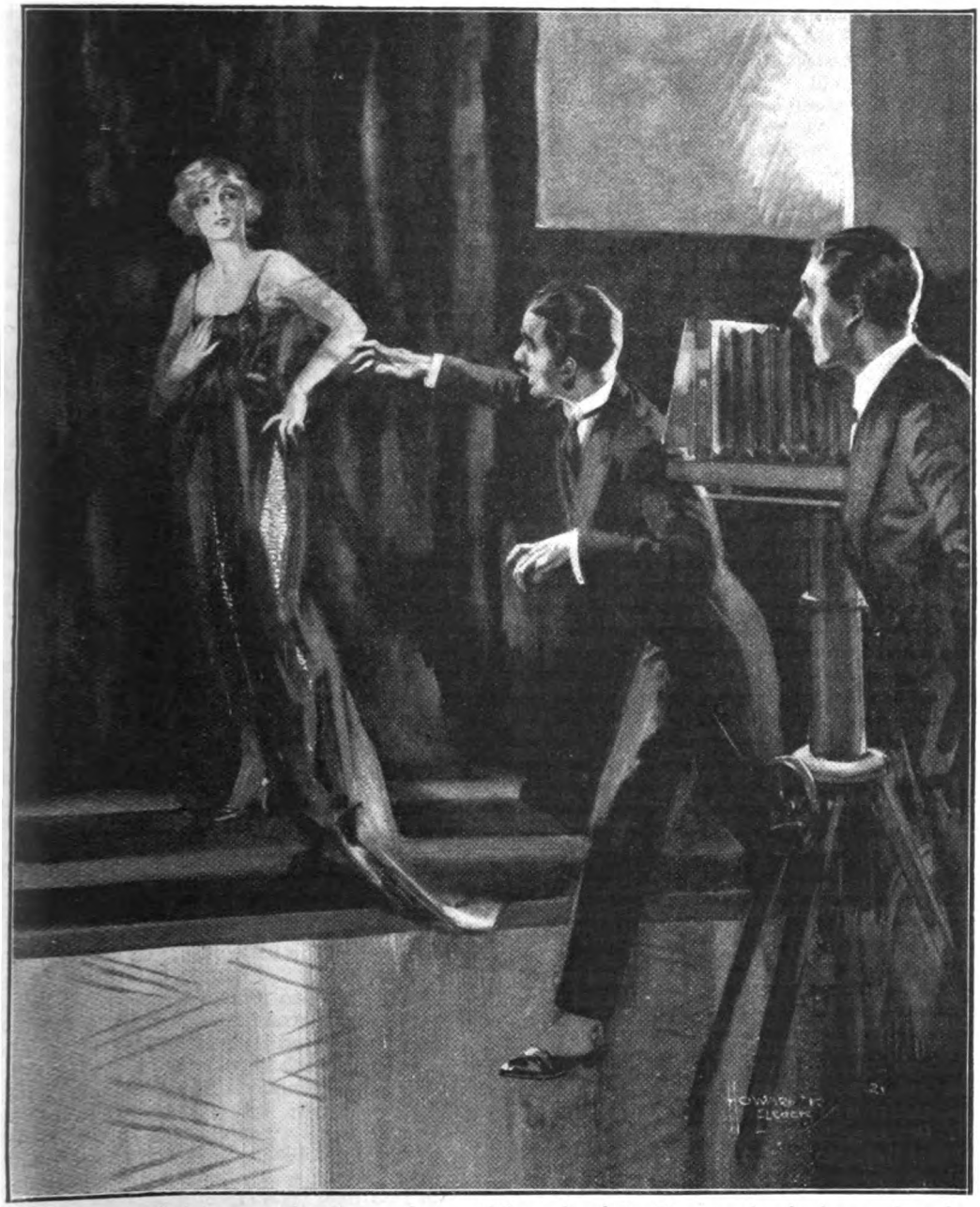
"Foolishness." The dressmaker's hands plunged to trouser pockets. "Foolishness. A Lépine dress is a Lépine dress. All the world recognizes it at sight. I do not need to plaster my name on programmes."

"Then you refuse?"

"I have not said so. This dress, for which act is it? The last? Miss Meredith wears purple in the last act. And you?"

"I'm supposed to wear black." Sheila's heart was beating furiously. She felt, somehow, that her whole career hung on the next sentence.

"And you do not want to wear black. No? Then you are a little fool. All English actresses are fools. What do you want to wear? Pink? Blue? Foolishness. Wait. I, Lépine, show you the black you should wear." He called across the room. "*Clotilde, Clotilde, faites montrer la robe noire que nous avons fait pour*"—he hesitated—"*pour la petite Henriette.*"



"Monsieur Lépine was bawling at her. 'Those hands! Do not clench them. Let the fingers lie loose. So. That is better. Take her now, Jacques!'"

Some twenty minutes later, Sheila Tremayne—not the hard-hearted, hard-headed Sheila who had bearded the great dressmaker at half-past ten of an autumn morning, but a tender, girlish creature frightened almost out of her wits at the risk she ran—faced the lens of a camera in Monsieur Lépine's private studio. Monsieur Lépine was bawling at her. "Name of a name!" he bawled. "Those hands! Do not clench them. Let the fingers lie loose. So. That is better. And the lips! Half open. So. Yes. Take her now, Jacques!"

The shutter clicked, clicked again.

" And that will be enough," said Monsieur Lépine. He handed Sheila down from the black velvet steps on which she had been posing, and said :—

" Now remember. Not a word. You take it off. We put it in a box. It goes home with you. The shoes and the stockings you fetch this evening."

" But the price, Monsieur ? The price ? " stammered Sheila.

The dressmaker bowed. " When you wear it, Mademoiselle, the frock is priceless. And remember, for two years we have the exclusivity of your photograph. Also, when you are a star," he smiled, looking at his handiwork, " but, indeed, you are a star already—it is I, Lépine, who will dress your plays."

And he added, to himself : " Perhaps, also, I teach the Meredith woman that it does not pay to bother the great Lépine."

VI.

TO the audience, a West-end " first night," especially a Marcia Meredith first night, is little more than a Society function. The audience knows their Marcia, knows the type of play she is sure to have selected. The audience is prepared to applaud, more or less vociferously, for three hours—and read about itself in the papers next morning.

But behind the scenes all first nights are electric with tension. From the author, pallid in the wings, to the least important stage-hand runs a current of nervous anticipation—of sheer longing for the moment when the final curtain-call shall signal " Success."

Sheila Tremayne, darting—second act over—to the dressing-room she shared with Mrs. Masterson's maid, was hardly conscious of Basil Harrington's—

" Going well, Miss Tremayne. And you're simply splendid." She knew only that now, *now*, *NOW*, was the moment. For this moment she had borne with Marcia Meredith through four long weeks ; for this moment she had faced Lépine ; for this, through an interminable dress rehearsal, she had suffered Mr. Peaston, the producer, suffered the agony of that " simple black frock," of that cut and colourless speech.

She said to herself, as she closed the dressing-room door and began to unfasten the " simple " day-dress she had been wearing : " She'll have to wait—she'll have to wait for her cue. I mustn't fluff—or she'll chip in. I *must* be calm. I *must* be calm."

The tiny dressing-room spun round her. Round and round. She was aware, dimly, of Mrs. Masterson's maid, of the dresser tying the black apron round Mrs. Masterson's maid's black silk dress. And she thought, " Black silk ! The maid wears black silk. I, too, was to wear black silk. So that was Marcia Meredith's idea. The maid and the millionaire's daughter. Both colourless. Both nonentities."

" And that finishes *you*, Miss Arkwright," interrupted the dresser's voice. " Now for Miss Tremayne."

" I think I'll be off, dear," said Miss Arkwright. " The curtain'll be up in five minutes." She nodded excitedly, went out.

By now Sheila was ready for her stockings.

" Bought these yourself, I expect," said the dresser, admiringly. " Must have cost a pretty penny. Pity the dress doesn't come up to them."

Sheila's whitened right hand felt in her corsage, and came away clutching a piece of paper.

" I'm not going to wear *that* dress, Mrs. Fell. There's a box under my table. You might get it out." Her right hand passed the paper. " And this is for you."

Mrs. Fell took the paper, uncrinkled it—and laughed. " Bradburys is scarce these days," said Mrs. Fell. " Funny their changing your dress at the last moment ; and me knowing nothing about it."

" Nobody knows," murmured Sheila.

The fat, red-faced woman looked up from her dragging out of the box.

" Nobody ? Bless my soul ! "

" Nobody—except you. And you're to keep quiet till I'm on. Do you understand ?"

Mrs. Fell cut the string of the box, and laughed again. " 'Tain't none of my business," said Mrs. Fell, " but the theatre's the theatre. There's rules, and there's regulations. There's contracts." She fumbled with the tissue-paper. " I shouldn't do anything to upset folk if I was you, my dear. Not that I won't keep quiet if you wants me to." Then, with a little staccato cry, " Lor', what's this ? "

" Oh, that "—to Sheila her own voice sounded like a stranger's—" that's only a black wrap—to wear in the wings. The dress is underneath."

A shrill howl sounded down the corridor—the call-boy's howl.

" Curtain's up. You've got ten minutes yet," said Mrs. Fell.

VII.

SHEILA'S brain still spun as she waited, in the wings, for her cue. She tried to hear the words being spoken on the stage, but her ears dithered, refused to carry sound. She tried to think of her own words—but the words wouldn't come. Almost it seemed to her as though the cue itself would fail her memory. " And as for Miss Doris Gray—as for Miss Doris Gray "—that above all things she must not miss. Would she hear

it? She did not even dare peep sideways through the wings on to the stage.

And then, quite suddenly, her brain ceased spinning; froze to chill unemotional intellect. This was her one chance of success—and of Basil. She must not, dared not, could not fail.

"Cold, Miss Tremayne?" whispered a voice, Miss Arkwright's.

"No." Sheila drew the black wrap which had provoked the whisper closer about her figure. Miss Arkwright tip-toed away.

Now the girl in the black wrap could hear, quite distinctly, every word of the scene on the stage. In three minutes, less than three minutes, she would have to discard the wrap to make her entrance. And Basil, Basil would be "off." She would be alone with the audience, that audience all eyes and shirt-fronts, with the audience and Marcia.

She peeped through the wings, saw Basil, heard his voice. He was making love, stage-love, to Mrs. Masterson. Beyond his bent head, she guessed the audience. The audience were silent; all eyes; tier upon tier of eyes.

"Cyprian!" — Marcia's voice — "dear, dear boy."

"Marcia, don't. It isn't fair. It isn't fair to Doris."

The fatuous words stung Sheila to quick rage. "That old woman," she thought, "that old woman and my Basil."

Then Sheila Tremayne disappeared from Sheila Tremayne's mind—and "Doris Gray" took her place. Doris Gray tip-toed, still shrouded, to the door through which she must make her entrance; Doris Gray listened—real for the moment—to her rival, Mrs. Masterson. Doris Gray flung aside the wrap that hid Lépine's masterpiece; heard the gasp of a staggered stage-manager behind her, heard the opposite door click to Basil's exit, heard her cue, and trod from gloom to glare without a tremor.

She stood in a blaze of light. She had forgotten the audience, forgotten the scenery, forgotten Sheila Tremayne. She was Doris Gray—facing Mrs. Masterson. And Mrs. Masterson loathed her. That she could see in Mrs. Masterson's dark green eyes. In those eyes, too, she could see herself—the millionaire's daughter, a tiny shimmering vision of black and silver, gold hair high on white nape.

But Marcia Meredith—who was always Marcia Meredith and never the character she played—saw more than a tiny vision. Into her mind—even as she mouthed her part—came one clear thought. "Lépine! Only Lépine could have designed that black velvet, slashed it to show the silver underskirt." And the audience—Marcia never forgot the presence of her audience—the audience was "eating" both the girl and the frock. Marcia could see, out of the tail of her mental eye, women's glasses focused, women's mouths wide in wonder.

Rage took her by the breasts. How dared this girl, this Tremayne girl, play such a trick! To-morrow—no, not to-morrow, to-night—she should leave the theatre, leave it for good. Yet the scene must be played out to the end. Thank goodness, she had had the foresight to cut that last speech—would they never come to that last speech? Must she, Marcia Meredith, stand there for ever, mouthing her foolish lines, knowing herself outwitted, outshone before her own first-night public, in her own theatre?

And now Doris Gray, too, grew conscious of her audience—as of a great friendly dog, faithful-eyed and adoring—a great dog that would leap to protect her against all enmity. She knew she could whistle that dog at will; could feel it thrilling at her voice, at her every gesture.

And so those two—painted women between painted walls—played out their comedy.

"But I love him, Mrs. Masterson, I love him." Marcia knew, even from the first inflexion of the girl's voice, that the speech would be spoken to its finale; and Sheila, watching those green eyes, knew victory. How those green eyes, those thin lips, could hate! And yet, and yet the thin lips were powerless. They dared not speak. She—Sheila Tremayne who was Doris Gray—she, Doris Gray who was Sheila Tremayne—held that great dog in leash. If those thin lips dared but interrupt, the dog would growl.

"And you won't, you won't keep him away from me any longer, Mrs. Masterson? You wouldn't do anything, anything beastly?"

Now—she thought—now, open those thin lips! The game's played out between us.

And the thin painted lips opened. "Miss Gray, you have taught me a great lesson to-night. Have no fear. Cyprian is yours—and yours alone. Go to him."

VIII.

SHE had made her exit. Behind her, as the "built-in" door clicked, she had heard for the first time that rattle of handclaps which signifies an audience carried away. The rattle still sounded in her ears; her heart still beat to the triumph of it. And abruptly came reaction, silence in her ears, a coldness at the heart of her. She knew only that now, *now*—so soon as the curtain fell—she must pay for the thing she had done.

Marcia Meredith, that Marcia whose voice carried shrill through the painted canvas, would never forgive. She, Sheila Tremayne, had broken the unwritten customs of the theatre; next night, and all the nights to follow, the theatre would cast her out.

"Marcia, with a stage-smile on her thin painted lips—Marcia, astutest of business and *kissed* her before

Standing there, in the semi-gloom of the wings, Lépine's masterpiece draping her in shimmers of black and silver, she knew herself disgraced. They were all there, the whole company, twelve of them, waiting for the final curtain-call. But none of them dared speak to her, to Sheila Tremayne. Not even Basil! Basil was whispering to Miss Arkwright. Basil was afraid. She could see the fear in Basil's paint-reddened eyes: she could not see that his fear was all for her. Supposing that her very temerity had lost Basil for ever.

"Curtain!" said a voice. "First call." And almost before she realized it, Sheila was on stage again. They were all on stage, in the full glare of the footlights. In front of them, over banked flowers, the house rocked and rang. They could see the applauding hands.

Three times the curtain had risen and fallen—four times—five times. Now Marcia Meredith and her flowers must have the stage to themselves. Sheila, rushing off, found Basil next to her. His hand caught her arm. "*You* did it," he stammered, "you saved the play. That isn't her call. Hark at them!"

"It doesn't matter," said Sheila. "Nothing matters. Let me get away. I want to get away. I don't want her to see me in this frock."

Another hand caught her arm—Mr. Peaston's. Mr. Peaston was screaming in her

women—ultimately handed her rival on stage, flung out two whitened arms, the whole house."

left ear : " Miss Tremayne ! Miss Tremayne ! For God's sake go on ! Can't you hear them ? "

" Hear what ? " said Sheila ; but even as she asked, she heard them, the audience, *her* audience. And the audience was chanting, with monotonous reiteration :—

" Doris Gray ! Doris Gray ! *We* want Doris Gray ! *We* want to see Doris Gray ! "

" I daren't," stammered Sheila. " I daren't. Miss Meredith ! "

But it was Marcia Meredith herself—Marcia, clutching a great bouquet of the management's flowers—Marcia, with a stage-smile on her thin painted lips—Marcia, astutest of business women—who ultimately handed her rival on stage, flung out two whitened arms, and *kissed* her before the whole house.

For this is the one consolation of all artistic endeavour for financial success : that the public, the great honest, child-hearted public, is the final judge thereof, the judge whose verdict not even the most powerful dares gainsay.

Which is the only reason why Marcia Meredith has offered her house in Park Lane for the forthcoming marriage of " Miss Sheila Tremayne, whose performance of Doris Gray in ' Devotion ' has revealed a new delight for London playgoers, and that rising young actor Mr. Basil Harrington. (Photographs of Miss Tremayne, by the Lépine Studio, on back page.)"

TOUCHING PITCH

by

PERCEVAL GIBBON

ILLUSTRATED BY W·R·S·STOTT

IT was a saying of Sir John Wotton's that the only man who could touch pitch and remain undefiled was the passenger by sea. By touching pitch, he seemed to mean nothing much more desperate than risking the soilure of one's social fingers by talking to people without a previous introduction; and he commonly went on to relate how he made each of his frequent journeys to the United States a small adventure, confined within water-tight bulkheads from slopping over into the decorous channels of his everyday life. For instance, he was wont to avoid the glaring ships which carry the actresses and the bishops and the special correspondents, and patronize the slower, sedater boats which transport only cattle and connoisseurs in travel.

"Most amazin' fellers you meet, sometimes," he would assure his hearers. "Interestin', too! Don't believe in too much exclusiveness myself, 'specially *ong voyage*. An' the best of it is, you don't have to worry about droppin' 'em; they're dropped automatically when you land on the other side. Exceptin'—well, sometimes!"

That "sometimes" had its origin upon the morning when the *Minnehaha* was slicing her way across the tail of a half-gale within twenty-four hours of New York. Sir John Wotton, with the collar of his overcoat turned high and his tweed cap jammed low, paused in the lee door of the smoking-room to light his after-breakfast cigar. His handsome, elderly face, with its grey moustache trim and decorative as a stage ambassador's, was pleasant and eupeptic; he looked what he was, a busy, wealthy man for whom life and its affairs were savoury. A kind of humane worldliness was in his demeanour; there was not even the conventional contempt of the "good sailor" for the bad one as, drawing strongly upon his cigar to get it under way, he glanced round upon the three or four limp folk who drooped in the swivel chairs. He knew them all—the black-bearded Mormon missionary, the small college professor, the man who had invented a new typewriter, and so forth. He had enjoyed them in his own fashion; and in twenty-four hours they would be for him like the contents of a newspaper one has read and thrown away. With his cigar in order, he stepped out on deck.

The big boat was heading up to a strong and racing sea, blue-grey and abrupt, patterned with flying white-caps; as he glanced across the rail, it seemed to boil past the ship's high side like a mill-stream. From the other side of the deck he heard the dash and spatter of wind-borne spray driving aboard like hail; and as her bow plunged he saw the white of churned water rise about it in a snowy cloud. He lifted the cigar from his lips and breathed with relish of the cold salt air.

There was but one other figure in sight upon the length of the promenade deck. Sir John recognized it, and, balancing expertly against the roll of the ship, moved forward to where it stood, beneath the spread of the bridge. It did not turn as he approached, but stood, one hand upon the forward rail, gazing out over the water. Sir John, debonair and hearty, placed himself alongside.

"Fine, fresh morning—what?" he said,

agreeably. "Wind's as good as a drink of champagne, eh?"

The other turned as Sir John began to speak with a small motion that might have been a start or an involuntary shrug. He was a tallish young man, with a comely, unremarkable face and a little smear of black moustache upon the upper lip. He might have been twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age; he was strongly bronzed; and the face he turned to Sir John's easy geniality had no trace of an answering smile. For the rest, he was dressed in the fashion of Sir John himself, well and inconspicuously, a figure merely conventional, decent, and right.

"Good morning," he made answer now, and looked away again to the boisterous waters.

BUT if he intended a rebuff, he rebuffed in vain. As well threaten a duck with rain as fight Sir John with hints when he was in his pitch-touching mood. Several times since leaving Tilbury he had attempted conversation with this young man and been eluded, and there remained to him only twenty-four hours. He suspected that in this silent youth there was concealed a story that could be re-told afterwards, and if the conversational corkscrew could extract it, he meant to have it out of him.

"'Fine, fresh morning—what?' he said, agreeably. 'Wind's as good as a drink of champagne, eh?'"

"We'll be in by this time to-morrow," said Sir John. "Always glad to see good old New York again. It's forgotten more than London ever knew about some things; but what I always say is—pity it's forgotten 'em so completely—what?"

He laughed; he had a pleasant, infectious laugh, but it did not infect the other. "No doubt," he replied.

"Got friends there?" persisted Sir John.

The young man removed his eyes from the distance and looked at his questioner. "I don't know," he answered distinctly.

"Really? Not a New Yorker, then? D'you know," confided Sir John, "I've an idea I've seen you before somewhere. You remind me of somebody; dashed if I can think who it is. Let me see, Mr. ——er——" —the other made no sound to help him—"I don't think I know your name?" he concluded on a note of inquiry.

The other gave him back his look, the bleakness of the cheerless young face fronting the silken smoothness and suppleness of the elder one. A flash of reluctant humour slackened the tight lips under the smudge of moustache for the fraction of a moment.

"I'm dead certain you don't," he retorted.

There was not much left for Sir John to do after that save cover his retreat. He smiled complaisantly, spoke again of the freshness and invigoration of the wind, and then an inward-curling drive of spray came to his rescue.

"You'll get soaked if you stick there," he warned. "I'm for shelter. See you later, eh?"

"Sure," said the other, with his first approach to cordiality; and Sir John moved aft.

He went with no disturbance of his customary demeanour; his smiling good-nature was his armour and his weapon; and the calm that cut-throat rivals in the cotton-milling trade had never failed to disturb was proof against any quantity of mere pitch. He stopped and spoke pleasantly to a wan woman and a fat child of five or six who sheltered in the drawing-room doorway.

"Why, what's this?" he cried, bluffly, bending to stroke the little boy's round cheek. "Hiding from the wind—a stout feller like you! It's wind like this that blows everybody good, don't ye know! And don't you want to look over the rail an' see the sea go tearing past like a great big waterfall? Call yourself a sailor-boy?"

The child smiled up at him shyly. Sir John was admirable with children; he had himself an expensive son in the Guards and another at Eton. But then, of course, he was admirable with everybody.

"Waterfa'!" repeated the child.

"Rather!" said Sir John. "Like a big, wet, roaring, rushing waterfall. You get your mother to bring you out an' show you."

The wan woman held on to the jamb of the door and smiled faintly. She was the wife of the little professor who, not having the child to look after, was lying groaning in the smoke-room. Sir John nodded to her encouragingly and passed on, leaving behind him the fat child's tyrannical whine: "Wan' to see a waterfa'! Wan' to see a waterfa'!"

He strode aft and paused to pass the time of day with the big jersey-clad quartermaster of the deck, who was stowing away a pile of folded deck-chairs.

"Ha! G'mornin', said Sir John, cheerily.

"G'mornin" quartermaster. Nice little sample o' weather you're givin' us to finish up with—what?"

The big sailor stood upright, touched his cap, and smiled. "Won't do *you* no harm, sir—a little puff o' wind like this," he said, flatteringly. "But there's plenty o' gentlemen—used to the sea, too—as 'ud find it too much. I looked in the smoke-room door jus' now an' there was——"

He was big and brown-bearded, costumed and schooled to fill his part of a good-humoured, respectful sea-dog. It was his business to be likeable and to be liked; and he knew his business thoroughly. Sir John, in his man-to-man pose before him, was, therefore, all the more abominably startled when the friendly deference in the face that fronted him went out like a light abruptly switched off; a blue-clad arm took him across the chest and brushed him aside so that he reeled against the rail; and the quartermaster sprang past him with a fog-horn roar.

"MAN overboard!" he shouted to the bridge. "Man——" then altering it and shouting on a new note—"*Kid* overboard!"

And the ship that had moved through the seas like a thing intent only on movement, as a somnambulist walker in sleep, was suddenly awake at each nerve centre. Already Sir John, recovering his shocked faculties, had followed the direction of the quartermaster's eyes. Opposite the drawing-room door, the form of the wan mother lay, half against the rail, half in the scupper; she seemed to be making weak convulsive efforts to drag herself upright. All was plain as a spoken narrative: the child had had his way; he had been lifted to look over the rail at Sir John Wotton's "waterfall"; an access of sickness on the mother's part and his own eagerness had done the rest. Two officers came racing aft; the empty decks filled; the quartermaster at the rail untoggled a life-buoy and sent it spinning over. Bells were loud below; orders rained along the deck; and in the midst of it all came the one fitting and perfect culmination of the drama.

OF the dozen or so who beheld it in the enacting, Sir John was one. While most eyes were aft, straining for a sight of the lost child, he was gazing forward over the crowd that thronged the deck, greedy of interest, savouring the flavour of the pitch. And while yet the roused passengers were streaming forth he saw his taciturn companion of a few minutes ago, overcoatless now and in shirt-sleeves, make a bound like a long, easy stride to the top of the rail, poise there for an instant, and go flying outboard in a long feet-first jump to the uneasy waters alongside.

A bellow from the bridge—another shout from the quartermaster, more shouts from aft! Sir John, gripping the rail and staring, saw a black head come to the surface on the top of a swell, a swift white arm flash out in a motion of strong swimming; then both slid down to a trough and vanished. There was the jar of propellers reversed; the ship seemed to his landsman's eyes to be moving sideways; and a boat, manned by life-belted men, slid waterwards on squealing tackles. There was a babble of excited voices fore and aft till a megaphone from the bridge stilled it sharply.

Then, from high above them, like a voice from the sky, came the call of the man who had raced to the masthead to keep the child in view. "Port!" he called. An officer at the taffrail signalled the direction to the climbing and tumbling boat. Then, with a note of screaming exultation: "He's—he's got the kid!"

The passengers broke into a straggling cheer which the megaphone forthwith crushed to silence. Sir John turned to one who jostled him in his place by the rail and beheld a white-jacketed steward; he bent upon him the full power of his urbanity.

"Excitin', this—what?" he uttered. "By the way, *who* is the young feller who jumped after the child? I was talkin' to him only just now, but I didn't catch his name."

"Eh?" The steward withdrew his eyes unwillingly from the distant glimpse of the boat. Then he took in the general effect of Sir John and was at once supple and informative.

"Him, sir? He's the gent in Number sixty, sir; Skinner 'is name is. Young American gent, sir. Yes, sir—C. Skinner's 'is name."

"Ha!" said Sir John. "*Thought* he was a Yank. Well, he's done a dashed plucky thing, anyhow. We must give him a cheer when he gets on board!"

Nothing petty or insular about Sir John, you see; and since it was plain that somebody must lead that cheer, must prompt it and in some sort make it his own, he moved to and fro incubating the matter among the others.

He was at the after-break of the promenade deck when at last the boat came plunging down wind, round the ship's stern, and caught a line under her lee. Stewardesses received the child and bore it off to the hospital where its mother already lay; the young man who had rebuffed Sir John came slowly over the rail unaided. He paused to lay aside an oilskin coat which someone had wrapped round him, sending no glance upwards to where Sir John had marshalled his waiting chorus, indifferent to or unconscious of the many eyes that fed on him. If he showed anything at all, it was a sort of ruefulness at his water-sodden clothing. He glanced down at it with a little grimace; then came forward deliberately to the ladder that led up to the promenade deck.

His fellow-passengers made a lane through which for him to pass; to one side of it waited Sir John. The young man reached the head of the ladder; Sir John stepped forward, an oratorical hand uplifted.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" He beamed upon them; the voice that had held City diners spell-bound prevailed over the snatch of the wind. "Three cheers for the hero, Mr. C. Skinner! Hip-hip-hip——"

"Hurrah!" came the answering discord, and thrice, as the ritual requires, the "Hurrah" answered the "Hip-hip."

Mr. C. Skinner came to a halt as Sir John began, and his set face showed first annoyance and then plain surprise. If there had been any present to watch closely enough it might have been remarked that the surprise commenced with the announcement of his name. He stared at Sir John blankly; and then, as the last shrill and ragged cheer died away, his face relaxed to a slow grin. To the other passengers and their applause he paid no attention; he moved on and spoke to Sir John.

"Well, Nosey Parker," were his astonishing words; "so you've got the name at last!"

And not awaiting such reply as Sir John might have contrived, he showed a wet, ungracious, and departing back as he moved towards his cabin. And, since neither at lunch nor at dinner did he show himself in the saloon, Sir John gained no further opportunity to contaminate himself sportively with that particular pitch. And next morning he was too busy in getting ashore and easing himself and his belongings through the Customs to stay and watch how the hero received the reporters.

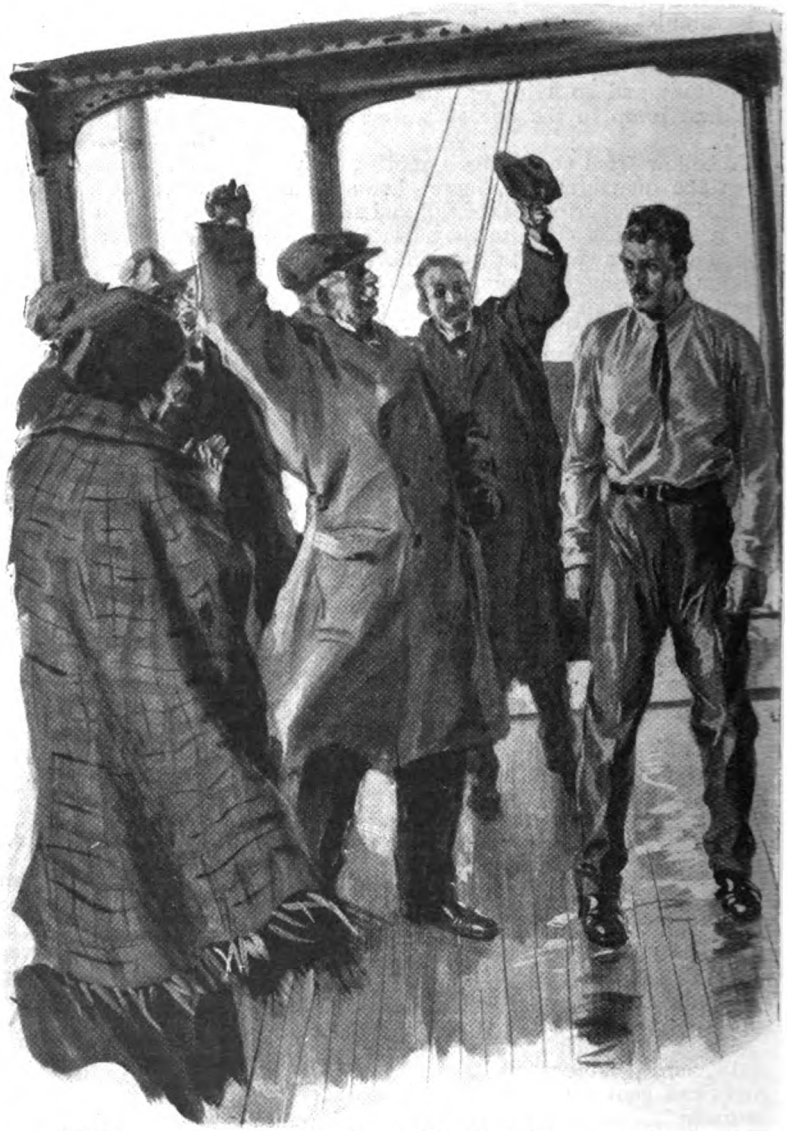
There is an alchemy in the mere act of going ashore from a ship; it is prone to turn the limp and seasick rag into a master of men and reveal the life and soul of the smoking-room as one as lifeless and soulless

as any other man. Even upon Sir John it had its effect. He had peeled from him the associations of his fellow-passengers as one doffs a soiled garment, and now he rode uptown towards his hotel wearing his customary front. He was genial still, nonchalant, and handsome, with a face tending readily to smiles and a fine strong hospitality of manner; but there was no longer the indiscriminating accessibility, the air of general good-fellowship with which he was wont to sail the seas. He did not so much enter the city as don it like a uniform.

HE lunched with friends at a club, but the afternoon he had to himself; he was not to commence real business till the next day. He sampled the Fifth Avenue and Broadway in the afternoon sunshine, genuinely enjoying the vivacity of them; but he was of his essence a gregarious and social creature, and, when evening came, he had had enough of being alone. A solitary dinner in some restaurant, with him isolated at a table surrounded by preoccupied couples, did not appeal to him; he checked his coat and hat and turned from the hall of the great hotel towards the dining-room. If, by chance, any acquaintance came to look him up, they would find him there.

White-breasted, black-clad, decorous, and decorative, he paused in the entry to the huge room and glanced about to see if there were anyone he knew. If there should be such a one, he was assured of a welcome; one had to know Sir John very well indeed—much better than he allowed most men to know him—ere one refused a greeting to his name, his good looks, and his pleasant manner. He saw no friendly native, and moved forward along an aisle between the tables to where an expectant waiter had drawn out a chair.

Suddenly he paused. At a small table by himself, and garbed like Sir John in the black-and-white which is the livery of caste,

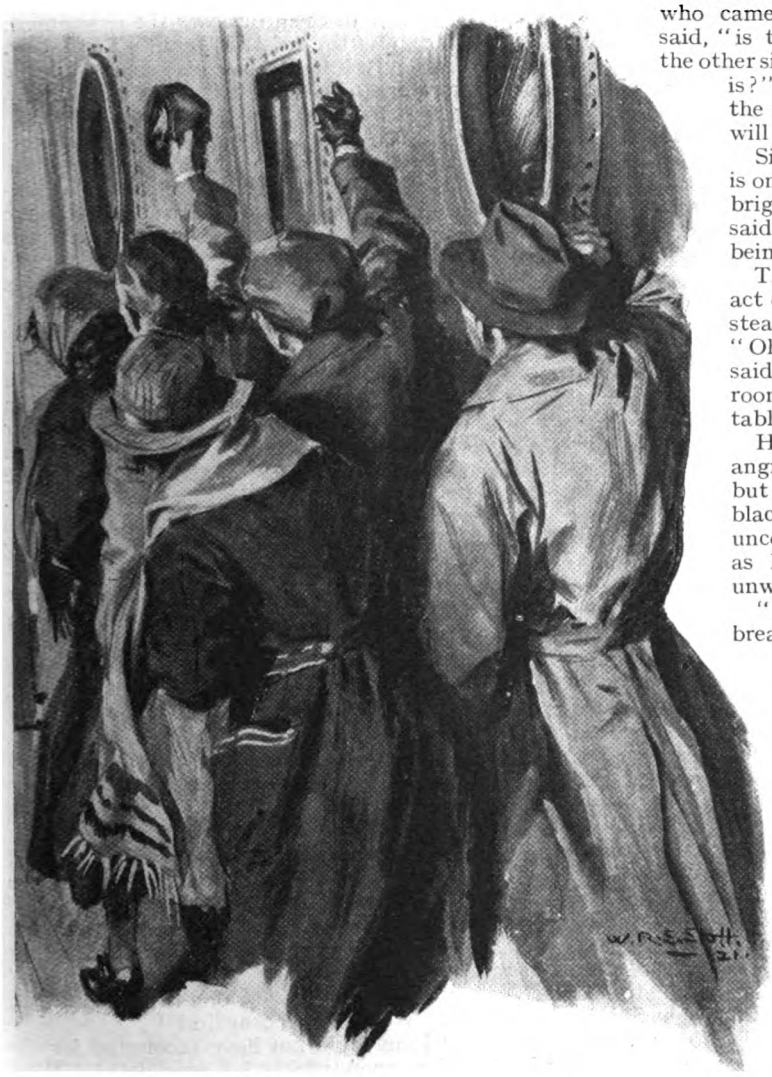


"'Three cheers for the hero, Mr. C. Skinner! Hip-hip-hip.' requires, the 'Hurrah'

was Mr. C. Skinner, the silent young man from the ship.

"Hallo!" said Sir John, heartily. He stood at the side of the little table opposite to the young man. The other looked up sharply. "Fancy seein' you! Didn't get a chance of sayin' 'good-bye' an' all that when we landed." He put a shapely white hand on the spare chair. "D'you mind if I feed here?"

The young man was staring at him with a look of helplessness, but there was a light in his eye, too.



'Hurrah!' came the answering discord, and thrice, as the ritual answered the 'Hip-hip.'"

"I don't in the least care where you feed," he answered, crisply.

"Right!" said Sir John, and sat down. "Hate browsing alone, don't you? Rather expected I'd see someone I knew somewhere; that's why I came in here."

"Well, you haven't," was the reply. Mr. Skinner beckoned a waiter, who came swiftly. "Say," he said, "is there a table free right the other side of the room? There is?" He rose. "Well, bring the rest of my dinner to it, will you?"

Sir John sat back, and it is on record that he flushed brightly. "Really," he said, "if you're so keen on bein' alone I'll——"

The other paused in the act of walking away. His steady eye fixed Sir John's. "Oh, keep your place," he said. "There won't be any room for you at the other table!"

He walked away, not angrily nor conspicuously, but to Sir John his straight black back was nearly as uncomfortable to look at as his contemptuous and unwavering eyes.

"Well, I'm dashed!" breathed Sir John. "An' all because I tried to be civil to the beggar! Anybody'd think—anybody'd think I'd been *borin'* him!"

It was astonishing. Only once or twice before had he encountered ashore humble shipmates of past journeys, and with them the single task had been to be gracefully rid of them. Never since he had been knighted for a timely contribution to the funds of the Conservative Party had he thus been despitefully used.

"Only shows you," he philosophized. "*Ong voyage* is one thing; *ong veel* is another. Mustn't mix 'em. Never again!"

And with these reflections Sir John Wotton figuratively cleaned his fingers after their

contact with that which proverbially one cannot touch without defilement.

His activities in New York and in the great cotton centres of the South have no part in this narrative. He dealt, bought, and sold profitably; his manner and style continued to serve him as a powerful asset; and if he talked a little less often at dinner-tables of his hobby of turning his Atlantic passages into small and refreshing social adventures—this to men who had travelled as a matter of course on everything, from their own feet to the bumpers of freight-trains — the change was the one last trace of his encounter with pitch. And presently, in the course of time and business, he restored himself to his familiar environment in London.

But it is the faculty of life to make strange joinings of its broken ends; no wise man counts upon an incident as finally closed. One sees Sir John Wotton, after a business lunch in the restaurant of the Milan, strolling towards the lounge to glance at the first editions of the evening papers while finishing his cigar. White waistcoat-slip, white spats, dark tie and single pearl—the complete uniform of the millionaires—are like a *décor de théâtre* for the effective presentation of his confident and utterly secure personality.

TWO or three sleek and youngish men were gathered about a little table, coffee-cups and liqueur glasses before them, conversing among themselves with that sort of wary quiet, that sufficient brevity of phrase, and the occasional over-loud laugh which is almost the professional manner of what is called the "sporting" man. Sir John gave them scarce a glance; he passed their table, picked up a paper, and straddled with his back to the fire-place, looking along its columns. If he was aware that someone entered the room immediately afterwards and crossed to the seated group of men, it was only sub-consciously. Yet their words struck upon his ear while he read.

"Why, here's Clem!" Someone was greeting the newcomer. "Come an' sit down here, Clem! What you goin' to have? Billy—Jack—meet my friend, Mr. Skinner!"

Still Sir John did not look up; the name did not strike him. There was a murmur of greetings and an order to a waiter. Then one of the others—Billy or Jack—spoke audibly.

"Say, are you the fellow Frank here's been tellin' me about, who jumped off a ship in a storm to fish out a little girl that had fallen overboard?"

The man who had first greeted the newcomer—he had a voice as harsh as a sawmill—broke in with a reply.

"Sure this is him—Clem Skinner, the best ever! The *Minnehaha*—that was the ship; it was in the papers; an' old Clem here, he——"

He went on with his version of the tale. Sir John, over whom the noise of their talk had flowed without disturbance, suddenly caught the significance of it and looked up.

The narrator's gestures sufficiently indicated which of the group was the newcomer; his face was towards Sir John. The latter, with a novel feeling of discomfort at the encounter and then in more bewilderment, stared at him.

He was a tall young man of about twenty-six or twenty-seven, and a catalogue of the main physical features of Sir John's fellow-passenger in the *Minnehaha* would also have served for a description of him. There was even the same little smear of dark moustache: but there the likeness ended. Here was none of that strong bronze of hue, none of the inborn reserve and taciturnity that were like a safe-door shut upon resources of character and personality. This man had a face that had seen more of lamp-light than of sunshine; its leanness was wasted rather than trained and ascetic; all the features seemed to droop and sag at the angle of the cigarette that dangled from the slack lip. And as he picked up his glass of brandy, his long, thin hand—a supple, adroit-looking hand that made the effect of some ingenious and narrowly-specialized instrument—quivered and slopped some of the liquor to the table.

"Yes—tha's me," he corroborated, as the man with the sawmill voice concluded. "Goin' over to States—I was; an' kid got spilled. Ole ship *Minnehaha*—yes! Tha's right!"

He was in the sluggish stage of drink. As he spoke his head moved as if he were nodding in affirmation of his own statements.

"An' where's your nurse, Clem?" laughed the man who had first greeted him. "Where d'you manage to lose him?"

"Outside—telephone!" The youth made a movement with his heavy head towards the door to the hall. "Want me come an' have Turkish bath. *I* don't wan' Turkish bath. Waiter—same again!"

Sir John could not have accounted for the impulse upon which he now acted. Why should *he*, of all people, move to vindicate the rightful hero of the rescue which he had witnessed? It may be that the essential right is a first motive in every man; we would all be champions if we could. Whatever it was, he laid down his paper and carried his presence over to the group about the table.

"Excuse me!" They looked round like one man. He was silent long enough for them to get the quality of him; one learns

these tricks in business. "I have happened to overhear the last part of your conversation. Do I understand you to say"—this was spoken directly to the youth who sat in face of him where he stood over them—"do I understand you to inform these gentlemen that you are Mr. C. Skinner who rescued a child from on board the *Minnehaha* in August last?"

The "sporting" men stared. The youth goggled owlishly.

"Wha'—wha's got to do with you?" he demanded at last.

"It has this much to do," replied Sir John. "I heard the statement made and I heard you corroborate it. I witnessed that accident and the rescue; and you were not there."

He was at his best now. They were all staring at him helplessly. The half-drunk youth gazed round vacantly.

"Ole man says I'm not Clem Skinner!" he observed in a stagnation of amaze.

"Look here!" The man with the rasping voice was recovering. "I don't know who you are."

"I'll tell you," interrupted Sir John, crisply. "I am Sir John Wotton, and this man"—he pointed with an inexorable forefinger—"is an impostor! You had better be careful how you support him in his tale. The police are——"

"Hush, for the Lord's sake!" besought the harsh-voiced man. The door from the hall was opening. "Here's someone comin'."

"Anyone may come," insisted Sir John. "As I was saying——"

He had meant to go on, plainly and audibly, and so to decline any privity or complicity with this impostor. But as the door opened and let the new arrival through, he fell as silent as any one of them could have desired.

"Here's nurse!" said the harsh-voiced man, with a spurt of uneasy laughter.

But Sir John did not hear him. He was staring with an almost ghastly astonishment at the man who entered, stood for a moment within the threshold looking around, and then strode forward towards the group. For here, at last, was the authentic young man from the *Minnehaha*, the man who had snubbed him so outrageously in the New York hotel—the pitch that he had touched and that would not be washed off.

As he advanced, he had a manner of seeing none of them save the sodden young liar where he lounged in his chair. Sir John and the rest were relegated to the status of mere furniture. He touched the drunken youth on the shoulder.

"Come on, Clem," he said. "We'll get out of this now."

"Not me!" protested Clem. "I don't *wanna* Turkish bath. 'U look here, Charlie; there's ole guy says I'm not Clem Skinner. Ole guy there! Wha's he mean, eh? Wha's he mean?"

He pointed waveringly; his sleek friends were watching expectantly. The young man looked round impatiently at Sir John. A brief sound like a wordless oath escaped him.

"You—again!" he exclaimed. "Are you—are you following me round—or what?"

Sir John gathered himself together. "I don't know what's going on here," he declared, "but it's something crooked. That man says he was the rescuer of the child who fell overboard from the *Minnehaha* and that his name is C. Skinner."

"Well?" demanded the other.

"And I say he is no such thing," cried Sir John. "Confound it, sir! Didn't I see you go overboard after that child myself? Didn't I see you and the child brought aboard? Didn't I meet you afterwards in New York? D'ye take me for a fool? Perhaps you'll deny that you were a passenger in the ship at all?"

The other was unmoved by his indignation; he was unmistakably the man Sir John took him to be—his very calm and unresponsiveness aided to identify him.

"Perhaps," he answered, imperturbably, to Sir John's last question. "As a matter of fact these gentlemen can testify that I didn't leave London between July of last year and January of this. And this"—he laid his hand on the young drunkard's shoulder—"is Clement Skinner."

"H'm!" Sir John, with his wits about him, surveyed him carefully. "I see it's no use talking to you," he said. "Story agreed upon, witnesses prepared, and—apparently—*alibis* for two of you! Well, whatever you're planning, I'm going to spoil it for you. I shall put Scotland Yard on its guard as fast as my car can take me there!"

"Hey, look here!" It was the sawmill voice raised in expostulation. Sir John ignored it. Severe and purposeful, he stalked to the door and forth from the room. In the same mood he collected his hat and stick: he was aware, as he passed through the hall, that the group had gathered in the door of the lounge and was watching him. He passed to the entrance and beckoned his car.

The commissionaire opened the door of it for him, and he was in the act of stepping in when a voice spoke beside him.

"I'll come, too, if you like," it said.

It was the tall young man of the *Minnehaha*. He, too, had obtained his hat and cane and now stood, darkling and imperturbable as ever, awaiting Sir John's reply.

"You!" said Sir John. "All right; come on, then!"

They took seats side by side in the big limousine and were borne away into the traffic of the Strand on their way to the Embankment and Scotland Yard.

For a couple of minutes neither spoke. Then Sir John, in an outburst that would not be controlled: "I'm not going to stand this dam' mystification, you know!"

The other nodded slowly. "You'd like an explanation?"

"You'll have to be pretty good at explaining," said Sir John.

"No," said the younger man. "I won't. But you'd have to be pretty good at understanding. I've not seen any signs of that yet. However—Scotland Yard, if you like. If you can stand looking like a fool, I can stand seeing you do it."

Sir John turned to regard him. "Is there time for your explanation?" he demanded.

"No," agreed the other. "I'm not good at telling things. It 'ud take longer than we'll need to get to Scotland Yard. Still—if we could go round by some longer way—it would save a lot of pain and sorrow to—to people who don't deserve it!"

For answer, Sir John picked up the speaking-tube to the chauffeur and the big car changed its course. Thus it came about that the tale was told within the luxurious box of the limousine while they moved about the drive in Hyde Park, seated hip to haunch, so that neither could gaze into the other's face.

It proved that the young man was right, he was "not good at telling things." He had as little of the art of narrative as ever was bestowed upon a sane and articulate human being. But he began well.

"That was Clem Skinner," he said. And, after a longish pause: "He's got a sister!"

"Ah!" said Sir John.

THE young man was leaning forward in his seat, one hand over another on the head of his cane, his hat thrust back from his forehead. He spoke without warmth of voice, without gesture or vividness of phrasing; it was less like a tale than a formal report; yet through its terse crudity there penetrated to his hearer some vision, some actual sense of its matter.

"He's got a sister!" She was, it appeared, a girl of twenty-four, an invalid, spending painful days looking upon the sea from a couch on the veranda of a villa at Antibes, on the French Riviera, living from dawn to dawn by virtue of the ministry of her doctors. Dark or fair, tall or little—that was not mentioned; only in the tone of the narrator, a change of note, that showed like a glow through the level of his voice, conveyed to the listener a sense that for the speaker there was bound up in her the glory of life, the hope of heaven. "And he, Clem, he's all she's got—except me; and she's crazy over him. He's—well, he's a bit liable to hit it up; you noticed how he was, I expect; and Monte Carlo was a lot too near to Antibes to give him a chance. So it came to be sort of understood, without anything said, between her and me, that I'd do my best to look out for him and generally do the guardian-angel, elder-brother business around him. You see—if he did a murder, she'd still be crazy over him."

The guardian-angel and the elder-brother had not availed to ballast the youth who was spoken of as Clem. Those long, slim hands of his were shaped for the dealing and gathering-in of cards; the youth had the character of a flabby jelly, that sinks by mere lack of fibre to the lowest attainable level. He would go to his sister's bedside, yet quaking and stinking from a debauch, and she would rebuke him lovingly and jestingly, as one reproves a too enterprising child. "His mother was like that," said the speaker.

And all the while, he, her lover and willing servant, watched her melt, as it were, under his eyes, saw the mere bodily substance of her fade and diminish, and her life visibly on the ebb.

Jerkily, in such bald phrases as he might have used to describe any everyday transaction, he spoke of the conferences with the doctors, the doubts, the deferred decisions that fed upon his heart like vampires. Then the eventual verdict: there must be found someone who would submit to a transfusion of blood from his full veins to her starved ones. There must be *found* someone—as though that someone were not at hand, as though every drop of blood in all his hard and healthy body were not hers without the asking.

And naturally, it was Clem, her loved brother, who came forward and was chosen to make the gift.

"Clem, darling," she had said. "Oh, I couldn't let you, but Dr. Vaucher says it's so utterly safe—and without it, Clem, we'd have to part. Clem, darling, all my life I'll love you for it!"

He had watched them together, Clem with his head bowed to the pillow, she with her thin arm about his neck. The transfusion was for the following day; and that evening Clem had motored into Monte Carlo, and been motored back the following morning, unconscious, his blood-vessels foul with alcohol.

But—one heard in his voice that here he could have blessed the drunkard—she got the clean, strong blood after all. They blindfolded her; she was accustomed, as invalids are, to acquiesce passively in all

"'I am Sir John Wotton, and this man'—he pointed with an inexorable forefinger—'is an impostor!'"

hat a doctor dictates; and for an hour he ay beside her and knew that the beating of is heart was feeding and restoring hers.

"An' I took that Clem by the scruff of his oul and made him act it out. She wanted brother that had saved her, an' what she wants I'm goin' to see that she gets. Grateful to him? I'll tell the world she was grateful. Grateful an' happy!"

She had rallied after that; the rich life-stuff had saved her. And later it had been needful that Clem should go to New York

upon a piece of family business. She had begged her lover to go with him. "I know—now—that he's all right," she had said. "But I can so trust you, Charlie; you're such an elderly old thing; and it would make me happier about Clem!" Which settled it, of course, and he and Clem had departed for London and booked a two-berth cabin aboard the *Minnehaha*, sailing a week later.

Clem had been difficult in London. He had a way of gambling, as monkeys have of scratching; he drank almost as automatically as he breathed. He was as difficult to keep a steady eye on as the lively flea; and during their sojourn in London he had broken away from his companion.

"Gambling-joint, it was, in one o' those flats in the West-end. He knew where to find it all right. Lot o' jolly men—all majors and captains, you know; bunch of women who know the Duke of Hell and the dear old Earl of Blazes—and then the fools, the come-ons, champagne, bridge for baby points, an' later on, when somebody gets tired of it, *chemin-de-fer*. It's quieter than highway robbery an' much more profitable. An' there they were, Clem drunk—of course—and the money and the cards lying about, when in came the police. An' Clem—I told you he was drunk—pulls his gun an' shoots."

Nobody had been hit; it was not as bad as that. The promoters of the game had been heavily fined; the magistrate had showered penalties left and right; but Clem had been sent for trial. 'Six months, he got; six months' hard labour! An' that poor girl at Antibes."

"How did she take it?" asked Sir John.

"She never knew," answered the other. "Clem gave a false name; he was sentenced under it. And I went on alone to New York. And since that affair o' the kid on the *Minnehaha*—well, I've made Clem act that out, too. He's a real hero now. So you see why I couldn't let you go to Scotland Yard."

THEY were near Hyde Park Corner, and he tapped on the glass for the chauffeur to halt. The car drew to a standstill; he opened the door. Sir John drew a deep breath.

"I don't know what to say," he said. "It's—it's all very queer. That girl—that young lady—she's bound to find out some day. A false name, you know——"

The other, one foot on the step, shook his head.

"Who's to tell her?" he asked.

"Anyhow," said Sir John, "it's a pity she can't know what she owes you. I'd advise, if you'll permit me, that when next you see her——"

"No," said the younger man. "There isn't going to be a next time. You see, Clem had to give some name. So he gave mine."

He nodded, and, straightening that stiff back of his, turned and walked away towards the Park gates.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 98.

(The Second of the Series.)

FROM this last remnant of our French domain
Cheap holidays and milking cows we gain.

1. One prefix add, an artist if you wish:
   Another half gives an Italian dish.
2. She married—that we know. Did she exist?
   We are left doubtful by the novelist.
3. Hence made the harmonious blacksmith melody:
   'Twas underneath a spreading chestnut tree.
4. Where pedlars ply a roaring trade by night,
   Its flare affords the necessary light.
5. Trained in this art, the captain does not dread
   The rocks beneath or tempests overhead.
6. From bleak Castile he brought his Spanish queen.
   Few greater monarchs England yet has seen.
7. Who of its fruit the taste has once enjoyed
   Joins, all too willingly, the unemployed.

KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostic No. 98 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on September 10th.

To every light one alternative answer may be sent; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 97.

IF seasons by their fruits are known,
Autumn and summer here are shown.

1. In spacious times queen good and great.
2. Luminous and of little weight.
3. When thus, a door is not a door.
4. Now think of eighteen fifty-four.
5. Sounds new, as someone was aware.
6. 'Tis thus some ladies treat their hair.
7. A Roman standard, or a bird.
8. Five-lettered palindromic word.
9. A current yarn, untrue perhaps.
10. Recurring, when twelve months elapse.

1.	B	es	S
2.	L	igh	T
3.	A	ja	R
4.	C	rime	A
5.	K	ne	W
6.	B	o	B
7.	E	agl	E
8.	R	efe	R
9.	R	umou	R
10.	Y	earl	Y

Solvers who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers to their queries should, with their letters, enclose a stamped addressed envelope, and he will endeavour to reply.

PHIL MAY.

SOME UNPUBLISHED DRAWINGS

by

ARTHUR LAWRENCE

THE public stock of harmless pleasure was diminished just eighteen years ago—August 5th, 1903—by the death of Phil May. He enjoyed a double privilege, inasmuch as while that considerable portion of the community which claims no special knowledge of black-and-white art highly approved of him as a powerful artist of "infinite jest," his unmistakable genius was fully recognized by his contemporary artists. Among them was Whistler, who once exclaimed, "Black-and-white art can now be summed up in two words—Phil May."

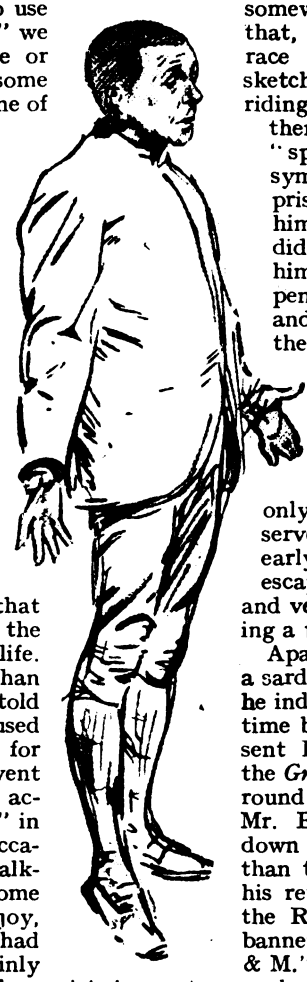
Ruskin thought very little of Whistler. Posterity has reversed that opinion. And so it must always happen with those of us who claim to be experts. In discrimination we may often be somewhat ahead of the "crowd," but it is always posterity—that is to say, the "crowd" of a later generation — which sifts the claims of an artist, and debates or discards the expert's opinion, until the work of the artist finds its true level.

In the case of Phil May the great public has been so steadily educated in what we term black-and-white that one is no longer appealing to a small coterie, but to almost anyone of intelligence in looking behind the scenes, as it were, and in glancing at some of his sketch-book and hitherto unpublished work, finding out for ourselves that beyond Phil May the great humorist was Phil May the great artist. He never dodged difficulties. He was for ever seeking them out in order to conquer them.

It was Mr. E. T. Reed, himself so well known for his "Prehistoric Peeps" and his Parliamentary sketches in *Punch*, who said to me the other day, "I regard Phil May as the finest *pencil* artist that we have ever had."

Apart from the extreme economy of line of his pen-work in the *St. Stephen's Review*, *Sydney Bulletin*, *Graphic*, *Sketch*, "The Parson and the Painter," and, finally, *Punch*, his pencil-work, the powerful modelling of his figures, his mastery of the whole realm of black-and-white work, was the wonder and admiration of all who saw anything of it.

Of those who were intimate with the great artist I have been surprised to find how many regarded his genius as a sort of meteoric event. Much as they loved him—and to know him well was to do that—they seemed to have thought that, like Topsy, he just "growed," and sprang from nowhere. Nature seldom, if ever, indulges in this class of phenomena. Wherever you find ability rising to the point which entitles us to use such a strong word as "genius," we shall find that some immediate or more remote ancestor has made some sort of progress along the same line of effort. The facts are that his paternal grandfather, Charles May, who was Squire of Whittington (near Chesterfield) and Master of the Beagle Hounds for many years, was a very clever amateur draughtsman and devoted much of his leisure to portraying local and village celebrities, using both ink and water-colour. Phil May spoke of his father as also having been quite a gifted amateur, although confining himself to the vivid delineation of horses, "which," Phil May would add, with a smile, "he was not less fond of riding."



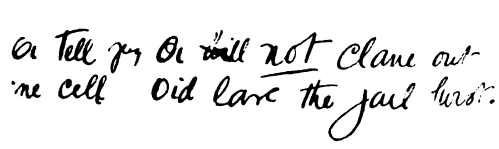
It was due to the failure of his father in business, and his death when Phil was a child, that the artist had to encounter the bitterest possible struggle for life. There was nothing he liked less than talking of himself, but he has told me, with a wry grin, of how he used to be compelled to take shelter for the night under a cart in Covent Garden, and made the close acquaintance of a lot of "low life" in that way. He told me of one occasion when he "swapped" his walking-stick for an orange which some ragged urchin was about to enjoy, and that was all the food Phil had for the day. I think it was mainly due to the extreme poverty and keen vicissitudes of his early life that comparative prosperity produced a reaction which resulted, for one thing, in rather reckless generosity and somewhat indiscriminate charity.

Always averse to discussing himself, there were two things which he impressed upon me more than once. One was that the only artist who had ever influenced him was Linley Sambourne, because of the economy of means in his work, and the other was his great desire to illustrate all the works of Charles Dickens. It was not to be wondered at that he was such a hearty Dickensian, for he shared with the other great master his love of the oddities, the candour, and the sensibilities of low life, with an almost corresponding distaste for the characteristics and foibles of the patrician. He looked upon his projected Dickens illustrations as likely to be his *magnum opus*, as something by which he was ready to be judged by posterity. He only illustrated one volume.

There was one thing about which he was somewhat sensitive. He assured me that, although he so often went to race meetings, he did so only to sketch, and never to bet. He liked riding horses, but never 'backed" them. This form of vicarious "sport" did not appeal to his sympathies. Yet it was not surprising if people misunderstood him in this regard, for not only did the humours of racing afford him such a wide scope for his pencil, but his fondness for his cob and his consequent appearance at the clubs, the Café Royal, and elsewhere, in his bold check coat, riding breeches, and gaiters, and the eternal cigar gripped in his teeth, together with his rather horsey look of preternatural sagacity, were not only reminiscent of racing but served to remind one that in his early youth he had desired to escape the drudgery of uncongenial and very badly paid work by becoming a jockey.

Apart from his work, Phil May had a sardonic humour of his own which he indulged in occasionally. A short time before the marriage of our present King he was commissioned by the *Graphic* to make a pictorial tour round the world. With him was Mr. E. S. Grew. The tour broke down when May had got no farther than the United States. The day of his return to London was the day of the Royal event, and many of the banners bore the simple legend G. & M." Phil drove to the office of a not over-pleased editor and told him how delighted he was that, together with his colleague, the populace should welcome him home in this splendid way!

Similarly, when out of England an irate tailor to whom the artist owed quite a tangible amount, alarmed at his absence, wrote him constant reminders. On Phil's return to London he called on the tailor at once, with a cheque for the amount, and thanked him most heartily for the large number of letters he had received from him. "You were the only man to write and make me think of the dear old faces at home, and,



bless you, my friend !—although I never had the courtesy to reply, yet you returned good for evil and continued to write ! "

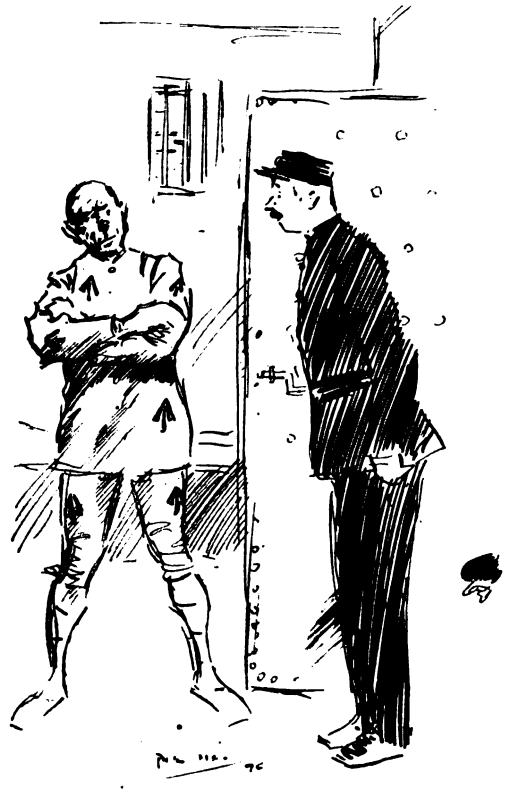
I have a letter before me in the handwriting of the great cricketer, the late W. G. Grace. It is addressed to Phil May. I will only quote the first sentence.

" Dear Sir,—Why, oh why, did you give Square Leg wicket-keeper gloves when you showed us 'Arry at the wicket ? "

Reminiscent of the answer to the old question of " Why does a miller wear a white hat ? " Phil wired back: " To keep his hands warm."

Very often Phil was the victim of this form of facetiæ, notably when, on one occasion, the editor of the *Graphic* felt none too sure that he could rely upon May for a full-page sketch which he had undertaken to do for a Special Number. Finding that Phil was about to stay at a certain hotel at the seaside, the editor had a number of posters printed off swiftly and induced the proprietor of the hotel to have them hung up in certain places before Phil arrived. Consequently, when Phil sat down to dinner and looked up he saw on the opposite wall: " Do not forget your sketch for the Special Number." The reminder confronted him in the billiard-room and elsewhere. When he retired to bed the same adjuration stared at him from the four walls of the room. When he went out in the morning there were several men walking up and down in front of the hotel with the same printed slur on his intentions. Impressed with the notion that these men or others might have instructions to follow him wherever he went, May dashed off to the post-office and wired his sincere assurances that all would be well, whereupon this tyrannization by poster was promptly suppressed.

The jokes which Phil used for his drawings came to him in all sorts of ways, some, as it were, by inspiration, others arose from his ceaselessly acute observation, and quite a number were sent to him through the post or were administered to him verbally and duly noted down on the shirt-cuff or elsewhere. It may not be quite so keenly appreciated by the public as it is by the

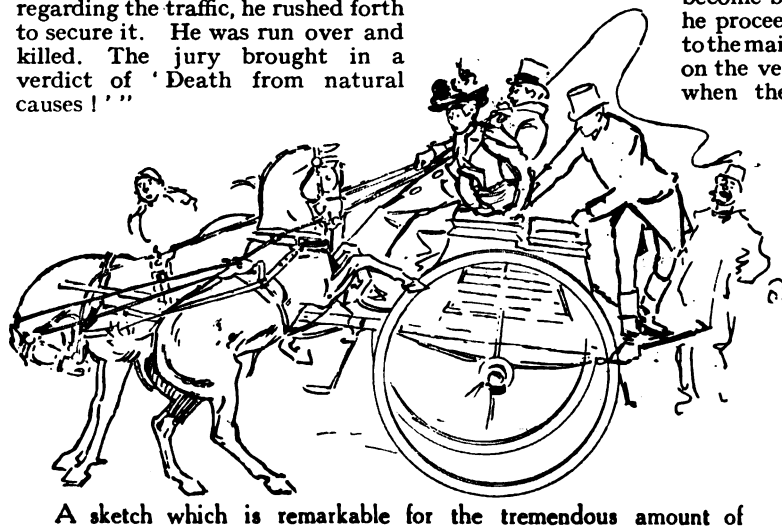


The illustrations on these two pages show his various methods of making trial sketches for a finished picture.

A fascinating example of his most minute work.

humoristic artist that the most useful joke is that which can be almost, if not altogether, expressed in the sketch. One excellent instance of this is the drawing he made of a man who has sought refuge in a cage of lions, with an angry woman shaking her fist at him through the bars. One realizes at once that the man is more afraid of the woman than he is of the lions, and it is almost unnecessary to look at the inscription beneath to see that she is exclaiming " You coward ! "

Of anecdotes which he could not very well use for a sketch perhaps I may be permitted to relate one or two, in the likelihood that they have not been published before. I had remarked it as a noteworthy thing that the Scot, instead of being offended, liked to hear stories of the alleged meanness of the Scot. " That is so," he replied, " and in a very few words I can give you the last one that a Scot told me. He spoke of a brother Scot who saw a sixpenny-bit lying in the read. Disregarding the traffic, he rushed forth to secure it. He was run over and killed. The jury brought in a verdict of ' Death from natural causes ! ' "



A sketch which is remarkable for the tremendous amount of action it suggests.

Then on the question of large families came the story of the Great Elk. " The father took his wife and a considerable progeny to one of the exhibitions at which there were many fascinating side-shows. They proved to be so numerous and the family so extensive

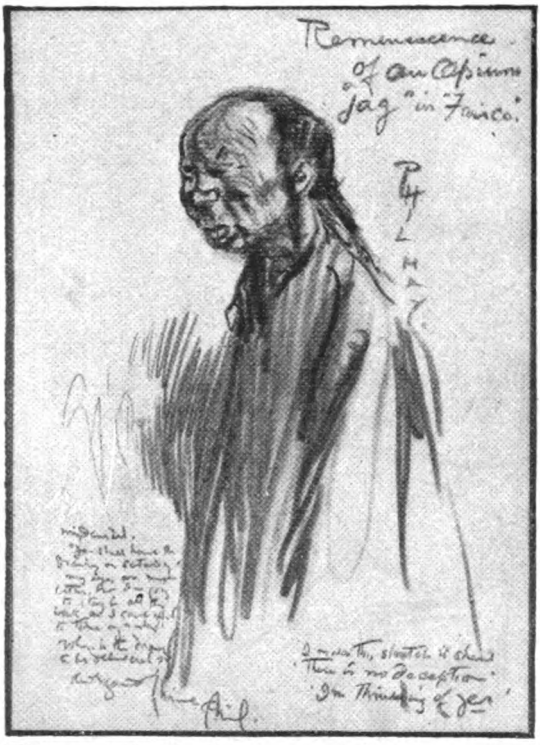
An unfinished sketch, full of life and action.

and eager that before long Papa realized that he was likely to become bankrupt. Whereupon he proceeded to steer his family to the main exit. The exodus was on the verge of accomplishment when the family caught sight of a poster-presentment of the Great Elk. All the children clamoured to see it, and even the ' missus ' thought it ought to be done. In a state of despair it occurred to Papa that he might try to bring off a business deal. Consequently he made his way alone to the entrance of the side-show and asked for the proprietor, who appeared in response to the inquiry.

Some quaint studies from Phil May's sketch-book.

'What is it?' said he. 'Well,' said Papa, rather nervously, 'the fact is I have rather a large family and they all want to see the Great Elk. Couldn't you make a reduction for a quantity?' 'Well,' said the showman, 'I don't know about that. How many are there of you?' 'There's the missus and seventeen children.' ''Ow many children?' 'Seventeen!' 'Don't you worry about seeing the Great Elk' said the man; 'I'll bring the Great Elk out to see *you!*'"

With reference to the sketches accompanying this article, the studies of the convict and jailer, on pages 236 and 237, provide an instance of the "second thoughts" which Phil May often indulged in. There is a study of the convict, followed by the complete sketch with the jailer and an inscription, and



This masterly drawing is one of the comparatively few done by Phil May in pencil.

afterwards an entirely new study in which, by the way, we notice his habit of making a footnote to some of his sketches in the form of a little sketch of himself.

The extraordinarily fine bit of work which he has enclosed in a border is reproduced on page 238 the same size as his sketch, and furnishes a fascinating example of his most minute work. Hardly less interesting are the score of quaint studies with which he has surrounded the seated figure of a man in full enjoyment of what would seem to be some racy anecdote.

In the other sketches we have the poise of the pugilist, while the tremendous amount of action in the contretemps with horses driven tandem is as remarkable as the expression with which the artist invests one of the pantomime characters which he was so fond of depicting.

All the sketches are from the collection of Mr. John Ross, with the exception of two, one of them an example of his strong pencil work, "Reminiscence of an opium 'jag' in 'Frisco," lent me by Mr. E. T. Reed, and a sketch of himself with "Punch's" hump, riding a toy horse, with Toby running alongside—one of several sketches with which he commemorated his election to the staff of *Punch* in 1896. This is from the collection made by Mr. Arthur Morrison, which he has now presented to the British Museum.

Phil May had several minor accomplishments. He sang most melodiously with a tenor voice of rare quality. He also excelled as an expert siffleur, so that he was in great request at little evening affairs in St. John's Wood and elsewhere. He spent some of his spare moments in composing songs which were set to music by Lohr. These songs, notably "Two Rose Songs," achieved some popularity, and even now small sums by way of royalties come wandering along.

Admitted by his contemporaries to be the greatest black-and-white artist of our own time, his art was referred to by Lord Leighton in the following words: "As a subtle draughtsman and delineator of character this man is head and shoulders above anybody else," and of Phil May as

A sketch of himself made to commemorate his election to the "Punch" staff.

a man a well-known editor for whom May worked for many years writes to me that 'he had a wonderful feeling for all that is finest in humanity, and I should like to testify that he was one of the most lovable men I have ever known." Such an *In Memoriam*, expressed in much the same words by all who knew him, is of a nature with which anyone might well rest content.

SETTING THE DETECTIVE A PUZZLE

by JAMES BARR

THE young man entered pompously. He greeted Sir Honor Mason with a self-composure so complete as to be obviously unreal. He accepted the proffered chair, and allowed a minute or more to pass before saying in a voice that told he had no fears on the score :—

" I hope I am not presumptuous in calling on you at your private residence, Sir Honor?"

" I, too, hope you are not."

Tubal Armstrong's wits were so focused on appearing quite at his ease that he failed to notice the coldness of the tone or the menace of the words used by Sir Honor Mason. Neither tones nor words were of the kind one would expect to hear pass in greeting between a man of business and his clerk.

" I am not here to trouble you lightly," continued Armstrong. " I have carefully considered my position, I concluded it my duty to come here, and I have come."

Sir Honor never for a moment shifted his challenging gaze from the face of the young man. He allowed the statement to pass without any expression from him.

" Before, however, proceeding to tell you what I have come here to tell, I must, in justice to myself, say that I feel you have not reposed the confidence in me that I deserve."

He paused, but again Sir Honor said nothing.

" I feel, too, that after this interview my usefulness as an assistant in your office will be increased, or else it will cease. That emboldens me, Sir Honor, and I shall speak frankly. When your sprained ankle "—he nodded towards Sir Honor's bandaged leg—" when your sprained ankle laid you up, you placed a Mr. Phillips, a stranger in the office, over my head as right-hand man to your nephew, Mr. Harry. That act I complain of."

He glanced at Sir Honor, who after a while nodded a short nod.

" Now, to show you that I am not wholly unobservant I tell you that this Mr. Phillips —The Temporary we call him—was placed there by you not because of his value as a worker. The reason of The Temporary's presence in the office and over my head is that you trust him to keep your nephew from breaking out. You feared, and you had better cause to fear than you knew, that Mr. Harry might 'get going'; that one morning, because of the night before, your nephew would fail to turn up, and that the office would be left in the lurch. Mr. Harry's failing is plain to all. You placed The Temporary in the office not for the work he might do but to keep an eye on Mr. Harry while he is in charge of the business during your absence."

The young man paused to give Sir Honor the opportunity to say "Yes" or "No." Sir Honor said not a word. Armstrong tried to feel at ease by telling himself that he had the winning card up his sleeve.

"You passed me over, I who know Mr. Harry's failing, and the symptoms that precede an outbreak. I think I was entitled to the job——"

"I think otherwise," interrupted Sir Honor, the very iciness of his tones telling of anger within him. His words did not cause Armstrong to deviate from the course he had marked out.

"Let me tell you what has happened. Shortly before one o'clock yesterday a Mr. Smee called at the office and was introduced by his friend The Temporary to Mr. Harry. All three went out to lunch together, and at two-thirty The Temporary returned alone. At four-thirty Mr. Harry and Smee came back to the office. It was obvious they had been indulging. Mr. Harry caused us to make up the safe half an hour earlier than usual, putting away books and cash. After locking the safe he and Smee went out, and it was twelve o'clock to-day before he returned to the office."

Again Armstrong paused, obviously expecting Sir Honor to say something. Again he was disappointed.

"When Mr. Harry unlocked the safe we got the books. But not the money."

This last statement, uttered in a quiet, mysterious voice, did call forth an exclamation from the baronet.

"Not the money! What do you mean?"

"The money had gone."

"Gone?"

"Close upon a hundred pounds, Sir Honor."

The baronet glared at the clerk.

"The cash-box was not empty, however. It held Mr. Harry's visiting card, on which was written: 'I O U the Cash. Harry Mason.'"

Sir Honor's face flushed red. His clerk, noticing this, inwardly rejoiced. He had felt himself on the defensive; now he guessed that Sir Honor was beginning to understand the strength of his position.

"Mr. Harry is abjectly mortified. He is distressed beyond measure," went on Armstrong in smooth, even tones that aggravated. "He vaguely remembers returning to the office some time during the night. He thinks he returned to make sure he had locked the safe. He remembers nothing about the money, nor has he more than two pounds on him. He is in a maze—amazed. He was for rushing off here at once to lay everything before you, but The Temporary induced him to hold back until such time as Smee is found and all avenues explored. Smee may know what happened last night. Smee had not been found at the time I left the office. I fancy Smee will not be readily found. I saw it my duty to let you know what has happened and is happening, and instead of taking lunch I came straight here."

THERE followed a long silence. Sir Honor was staring wistfully, almost dreamily, at the bandaged ankle. Armstrong knew right well how much Sir Honor loved his nephew and heir, young Harry Mason, and how completely his hopes were bound up in the generous, open-hearted young man's welfare and future. It was not surprising, then, that the baronet should be stricken dumb.

On a sudden the clerk turned to Sir Honor.

"Sir Honor, from the evidence before you what do you deduce?"

The baronet spoke very, very quietly.

"That my nephew, meeting a congenial soul, lunched all too well yesterday, that he began in the afternoon and continued into the night, that during the night he required more money, that he took the money from the office safe, that he left his I O U, and to-day, his head far from clear, he finds his pockets empty but has no idea how he got rid of his money."

"Do you recognize something further?"

Sir Honor did give this question considerable thought, then suddenly hit upon the right answer.

"You mean I should now recognize that I made a mistake in not appointing you to be my nephew's guardian?"

"Had you done so, Sir Honor, there would have been no genial Smee, no over-festive luncheon yesterday, no cash missing to-day. I make bold to state that frankly. But I leave it at that. Now let me tell you that your diagnosis is wrong."

"Wrong?" ejaculated the baronet, in astonishment.

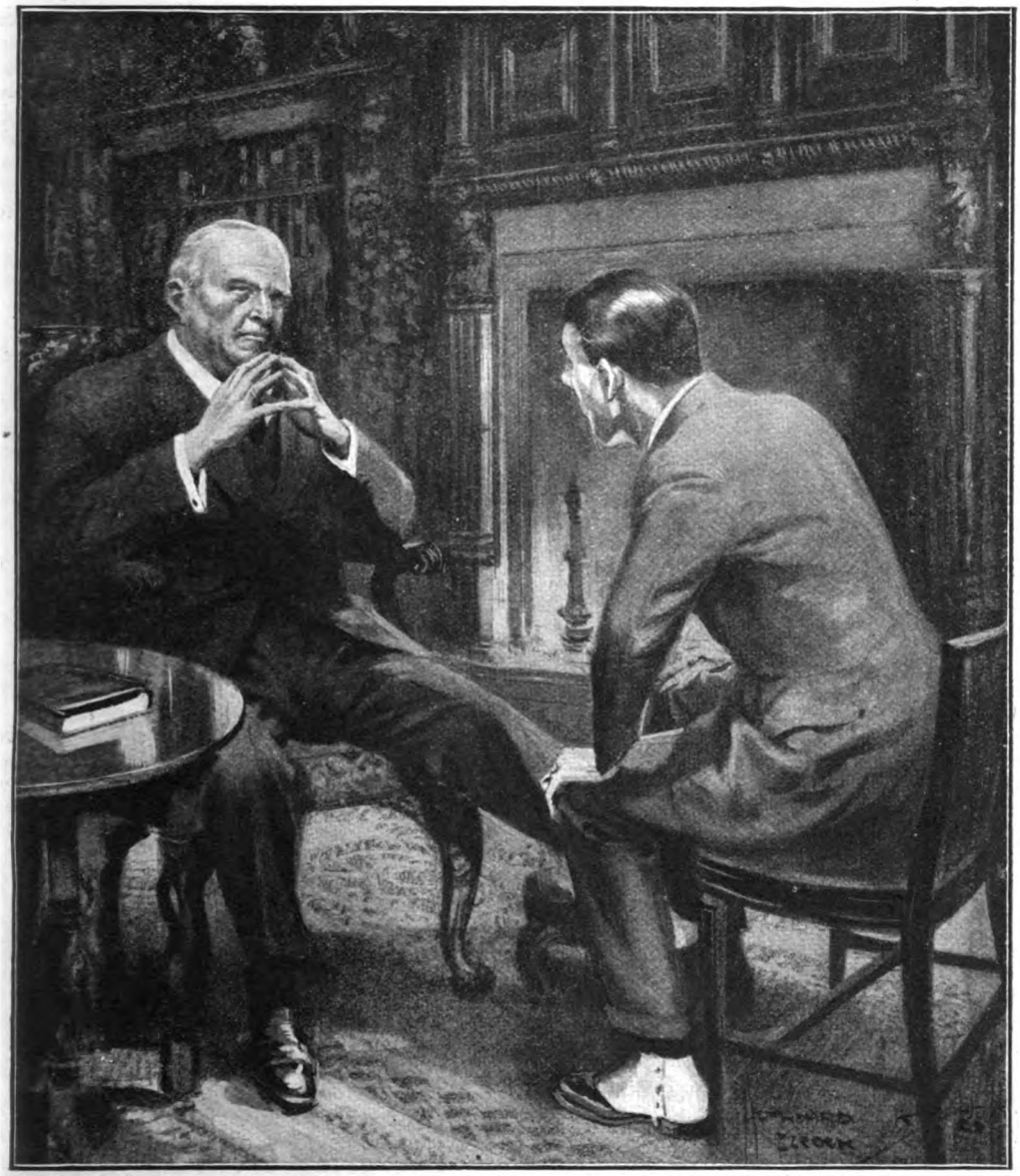
The clerk placed his palms on his knees, shot his face forward, and stared direct into Sir Honor's eyes.

"The Temporary stole the money."

A little while and the cold composure returned to Sir Honor. Armstrong was visibly disappointed. He had looked for an explosion, and no such thing happened.

"Your nephew is tearing his heart to tatters, and all the time the man who did steal the money is standing by as cool as you please and offering unfelt sympathy. Your office at the moment is a place of tragedy—and comedy. Your nephew, Mr. Harry, is in the very depths of despair. The Temporary is play-acting. He looks on without a quiver at the excruciating mental agony of one he perfectly well knows to be innocent. He is moving about the office with an air that says he trusts sincerely all will come out all right in the end, knowing quite well there is not a million-to-one chance of it coming out right for Mr. Harry and wrong for the thief. But, by thunder, that million-to-one chance comes off."

Armstrong, letting himself go, brought his



"The clerk placed his palms on his knees and stared direct into Sir Honor's eyes. 'The Temporary stole the money,' he said."

right fist thumping down upon the palm of his left hand.

"Mr. Harry did not touch the money; Mr. Phillips did touch it. In both meanings of the word he 'touched' it."

This time Armstrong resolved not to continue till Sir Honor displayed some desire to hear more. Sir Honor, after a time, asked the clerk to proceed.

"I hope I am not conceited, but I have always considered myself a bit of a detective. However. I do not lay claim to great credit for detecting The Temporary, except, of course, that I have been rewarded for a vigilant watch-out in the interests of the office carried on by me ever since I was employed by you. Above my desk, you may not have noticed, is a small mirror——"

"I have noticed. It commands a clear view of the door to my private office."

Sir Honor came out with this so fiercely flat that for the first time Armstrong became just a trifle flustered.

"That so happened, Sir Honor, but that

is not the purpose of the mirror. I have a just pride in myself. In an office such as yours a clerk, sir, with his necktie awry, or ink on his cheek, is not a credit."

The baronet allowed his lips to twitch into the briefest possible smile, but said nothing.

"One week after Mr. Phillips was installed as Temporary," continued Armstrong, "I happened to glance up into the mirror. As you have observed, it hangs over against where I sit and a little above the level of my head, so that it takes in a view of the book-keeper's desk and the safe as well as your door. The book-keeper had gone out and I and The Temporary were alone in the office. By the merest chance I glanced up at the mirror in time to see a remarkable happening. It was this. The Temporary had placed on the book-keeper's desk the little bag he brings with him to the office each morning and takes away each evening. At the moment I shot my fortunate glance I saw him hastily open the bag and drop something into it. Guess what that something was?"

Sir Honor shook his head.

"The office soap!"

"The office soap?" exclaimed the baronet, incredulously. "Ridiculous!"

"Wait a moment. Perhaps not so ridiculous as you think. I, too, thought it ridiculous until—but all in good time. The Temporary glanced round to make sure he had not been observed and satisfied himself that such was the case, for I was too sharp to be detected. He then placed the bag on the floor. Later on he kicked up a fuss because the soap had vanished from the wash-stand."

"A piece of ordinary yellow soap?" exclaimed Sir Honor, incredulously.

"I thought it a piece of ordinary soap. The Temporary, however, had turned it into a piece of extraordinary yellow soap."

'I am mystified," admitted Sir Honor.

"So was I—for a time. I could not believe my eyes. I felt I was doing The Temporary an injustice in looking upon him as a petty thief. So, indeed, I was. In order to prevent myself doing an injustice I felt it my duty to do an unmannerly thing. I watched my chance. I opened his bag to make sure it was the office soap."

"And it was?"

"It was more. Our soap lay there strangely decorated."

"I am tired of mystery. Make your meaning plain."

"The design on the soap was the print of our safe key. Our safe key had been pressed into the soap, leaving a clear print of its make. That morning Mr. Harry had carelessly left the key in the safe."

"Then you think——"

"This is how I piece together the jigsaw puzzle after thinking the matter over seriously. From that impression in the soap The Temporary had a key made to open the safe. He got his friend Smee to induce Mr. Harry to drink too much. Smee, when Mr. Harry was fuddled and muddled, suggested going to the office to see that the safe was locked. Mr. Harry, acting foolishly, did look into the office, found the safe quite all right, and went away. Then along comes The Temporary, opens the safe with his key, takes the cash, places the forged I O U in the cash-box, locks the safe again, and—*voilà!*"

Armstrong beamed on Sir Honor a "There-you-are" look.

"The Temporary has the money; Mr. Harry has the dishonour. So thinks The Temporary; so thinks Mr. Harry. But Mister Thieving Temporary is reckoning without my little looking-glass. A few moments ago you yourself smiled at the vanity of it. My mirror smiles back."

"That is all?" asked Sir Honor, after a while.

"Enough, too, I should think," answered the clerk.

"And so do I," said Sir Honor, in a tone that implied the interview had come to an end.

ARMSTRONG as he arose shot a startled glance at the older man. This abrupt simultaneous dismissal of the subject and himself was alarming. He steadied himself, then stated:—

"I have overstepped routine. Duty impelled me. I have come to you in office time; I have gone over the heads of my superiors; I have reported direct to you. I have either done right or I have done wrong; my reward will tell me which. I ask to know."

"Your reward will be a just reward," said Sir Honor, cryptically.

Armstrong stood for a few seconds undecided, then asked:—

"Am I still in your employ, Sir Honor?"

"I have not discharged you."

"Is my position in your employ the same as before coming here?"

'At the moment exactly the same. You have done your duty according to your lights. Two weeks from to-day come to me in my office and tell me whether you believe you have won promotion."

Completely mystified by his employer's bearing towards him, Armstrong, crestfallen, but still believing in himself and still hopeful, hurried back to the office.

LESS than half an hour after the clerk had quitted the baronet's door the maid announced Mr. Norbert Phillips. At mention of The Temporary's name Sir

Honor's sprained ankle seemed to make a marvellously sudden mend, for it inconvenienced him in no way when he hurried to meet him at the door.

" I thought it better to see you, Sir Honor, before your nephew had a chance. I expect he'll be along some time this evening. He has something to tell you." The Temporary was smiling broadly. " He has had a shock. He has suffered."

" You stole the office soap," asserted Sir Honor, abruptly.

The Temporary started violently, and swung his face sharp towards the baronet and raised his brows in surprise. Sir Honor spoke at great speed.

" You stole the office soap. On it you took an impression of the safe key, from that impression you had a key made, you got a friend of yours to dine and over-wine my nephew, you made use of your key, you removed the cash, you left in the cash-box a false I O U which confronted Harry when the safe was opened on his arrival at the office late to-day. There's where the shock came in. The boy thinks he took the office money—my money. The boy thinks he squandered the office money—my money. He suffers agonies. I have given you the first half of the story, be good enough to tell me the end "—here Sir Honor's voice rose and his eyes darted fire—" for, by heavens ! sir, there's got to be an end to the story that leaves my splendid nephew's name untarnished. There has got to be an end that leaves the splendid boy's conscience clear. I would not have that great-hearted boy go through life thinking he had rifled my safe—no, not for all I possess. Now, what is the end ? "

The baronet in his intensity had towered threateningly over The Temporary, who gazed up at him flabbergasted.

" The soap ? The false key ? How—how do you know of the soap and the key ? "

" Sir, the ' how ' matters not one jot. What does matter, and matters vitally, is this : How have you arranged the facts so as to effect the purpose we have in view, the saving of the boy from himself, and still leave him without a stain on his soul ? That's what I wait to hear."

The Temporary laughed rather a disconcerted and puzzled laugh.

" I thought I came here to tell you—— How you come to know—— However, as you say, the ' how ' matters not a rap. Without more ado I'll give you the end. It's such an end as I sought to reach—and you."

" An end that leaves Harry in possession of his good name ? "

The Temporary nodded affirmatively.

With a sigh of relief more intense than one would have expected from such a strong character, Sir Honor sank back into his chair.

" Let me hear the end," he said, quietly. " I feared——"

" When the cash was found to be missing I sent for my friend Smee."

" By the way, who or what is Mr. Smee ? "

" A mesmerist—hypnotist."

" Does that explain Harry's midnight visit to the office ? "

" Yes. Smee made use of his uncanny science to project into the mind of your nephew the suggestion that the safe had been left unlocked, and he accompanied Harry to the office at midnight. Smee is a good actor, too. An hour ago when we got him to the office—he was waiting at a prearranged place for the call—the surprise he showed at hearing of the missing money was splendid."

" He knew, of course, you had taken the money ? "

" He did not know I had taken it, for I have not taken it."

Sir Honor shot a challenging glance at The Temporary. In answer to that glance The Temporary said :—

" You know more than I guessed, but you do not know as much as you guess."

" Come, come, Mr. Phillips. You are not going to pretend to me that my nephew took——"

" Perhaps, Sir Honor, you'd best hear me out. Smee vowed that your nephew, at his midnight visit, had brought away no money from the office. Yet there yawned an empty cash-box and there lay an I O U. Then Smee evolved an inspiration. He set about reconstructing the crime—that is to say, the doings of the night before so far as the office and the safe were concerned. In the office we acted a scene that would have gladdened the heart of a Paris criminal judge. Your nephew was sent outside ; we locked the safe. Your nephew then came in, got down on his toes before the safe, unlocked and opened the door, and sat there poised upon his toes gazing into the safe, and cudgelling his memory to force it to recall what he had done at midnight. As you know, the safe consists of two compartments, the top filled with documents. Suddenly your nephew gasped out an exclamation of piercing joy. He thrust his hand in among the documents ; he pulled out the missing Treasury notes, every solitary one of them."

" From where, compelled by your mesmerizing friend's will, he had placed them ? "

" Not so. From where *I* had placed them. At midnight Harry had not touched the money. In the morning I opened the safe with my key and I hid the money among the documents, but took care to leave the corner of a Treasury note showing in such a position

that anyone down on his toes before the open safe was all but certain to detect it."

"And Harry?"

"Sir Honor, Harry has had the lesson of a lifetime. There will be no more dereliction of duty on his part. He rushed into his private office with tears streaming down his cheeks and sobs coming from his very heart. The reaction was overwhelming."

Sir Honor's eyes moistened so that he saw but dimly. "The dear boy—the dear boy," he kept repeating.

"Something drastic was called for to make the young man cut out his failing. That something has been done. For a whole hour he thought himself a criminal; then he learned with ineffable relief that he was no more than a fool. But, better still, he realizes that if he continues to be a fool he may one day be a criminal. He is too sound, too sane, too considerate of those who love him to run risks ever again."

"'You stole the office soap,' Temporary started violently

Sir Honor arose, forgetting all about the sham sprain which had furnished him with an excellent excuse for staying away from the office while The Temporary was given his chance to experiment on Harry. He went to his desk and drew a cheque for one hundred guineas.

Norbert Phillips, private detective. stood to receive it.

"You have earned the money I promised you. I believe you have accomplished your purpose, our purpose. I thank you—but, mind you, had I known the means you were to use to break my nephew of his bad, his dangerous habit, I doubt whether I would have had the pluck to sanction them."

asserted Sir Honor, abruptly. The and raised his brows in surprise."

"Thank you, Sir Honor, for the cheque. I think the means were justified. I believe our object is accomplished. Now may I ask you how you came to know about the soap and the key?"

"Ah!" bantered the baronet. "What is a detective for but to clear up mysteries? I have set you one all your own to unravel. Good day."

TWO weeks passed, and Armstrong stood before Sir Honor in the latter's private office.

"You have come to tell me whether you do or do not consider yourself deserving of promotion. Well?"

"At the time I did think I was——"

"But now?"

"Now I think not, Sir Honor."

The young man was in doleful contrast with the self-satisfied self of his that had entered Sir Honor's private residence but a fortnight ago.

Sir Honor spoke in buoyant encouragement.

"I'm not so sure, Armstrong. After all, there's something due to one who tries to be faithful. You tried. You were like a student undergoing examination who tackles a tricky sum in the right way, but makes a slip in the working out. Is he not entitled to marks for construing correctly? I think so. And I am adding one sovereign a week to your salary."

"Sir Honor, I am most grateful."

Sir Honor nodded recognition of the gratitude, then, lifting his eyebrows, remarked:—

"You look as though there was still a something——"

"Well, sir," grinned Armstrong, "there is a something that puzzles me. There's the impression of the key on the soap!"

"Ah," said Sir Honor, waving his hand towards the door, "this is a world full of unsolved puzzles. And they make Life such a diverting mosaic."

HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN CAMPBELL

I.

JOE QUINNEY, being somewhat of a pagan, said afterwards that the D'Avenant mystery had been solved by coincidence, but Susan, his wife, brought up in a cathedral town, thought otherwise.

The famous dealer happened to be staying at D'Avenant Old Hall when Lord D'Avenant was found dead in his library. Lord D'Avenant was better known as Mr. Nicholas Davenant, the head of a great firm trading with China and the Malay Archipelago. He bought D'Avenant Old Hall—and assumed the apostrophe of the ancient family—before his elevation to the peerage. Unkind persons affirmed that he was not even remotely of kin to the Simon Pure D'Avenants and that he had paid an immense sum for his title. This was untrue. Nicholas Davenant was the great-grandson of a D'Avenant, and his peerage was given to him because he had used his immense influence in China to obtain for the British Government certain important concessions.

Nevertheless Lord D'Avenant was known and feared in China, where he had spent most of his life, as "Old Nick."

He called upon Quinney shortly after he had bought Old Hall.

"It's full of oak," he told the dealer.

Quinney's eyes brightened. He loved oak.

"In shocking condition," said his lordship, testily.

Quinney became alert. He had discovered a process by which painted, stained, and over-varnished panels could be restored to their right colour and texture.

"I want you to take it in hand at once."

Quinney chuckled and rubbed his hands.

"With great pleasure, my lord."

"Also I have some very valuable Oriental china, a collection of forty years, made on the spot—in China, I mean—and you must find me the right cabinets."

Quinney nodded. He had heard of the Davenant collection, but he had never seen it.

"My collection is unique," said Lord D'Avenant. "I own one piece, Mr. Quinney, which is of a deep-blue colour, very thin and ntact. It rings like a beautiful glass. Small fragments of this rare porcelain are set as jewels and treasured as such. My bit is more than a thousand years old."

Quinney licked his lips, as he replied, solemnly:—

"It will be a privilege, my lord, to examine such a gem."

But, alone with Susan, he confessed that he was not favourably impressed by his new patron's appearance.

"Looks like an old vulture, Susie."

"Looks ain't your strong point, Joe," remarked his wife.

Quinney assented cheerfully, staring at

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his hands, of which he was slightly vain, not without reason.

"Talons he has, my girl. And such a beak! But—brains! More than his rightful share of them. A very cunning and evil old bird!"

"You have nothing to do with him, Joe."

He laughed, and told her what had passed at the first interview.

"To get good pay for doing such work, Susie, makes me forget that a black east wind is blowing."

Susie shook her head mournfully.

"If he's a wicked old sinner, I say—walk not in the ways of such."

"Lord love you!" retorted the autocrat of Soho Square, "if I did business with saints only, me and you, dearie, would be in the poor-house."

II.

WITHIN a fortnight Quinney and his craftsmen were comfortably lodged in the ancient house.

Lord D'Avenant received him on arrival.

A housemaid ushered the dealer into the library, which was on the first floor and the least attractive of many fine reception-rooms. The noble owner explained why he had chosen it.

"It's next my bedroom, Mr. Quinney. I'm not a sound sleeper. I do a lot of work when I can't sleep. Nice view—hey?"

An oriel window commanded the main approach. An immense desk was littered with papers and queer packages. Quinney noticed at once a faint odour like that of sandal-wood. The atmosphere was warm and slightly stuffy. Having opened the casement, Lord D'Avenant carefully closed it, and indicated a chair.

"Sit you down, Mr. Quinney."

Quinney sat down, but his host, arrayed in a gorgeous dressing-gown, paced restlessly up and down, talking volubly.

"We have the place to ourselves. No flunkeys as yet. My own servant, and a maid or two. Nice and quiet—hey?"

"Very quiet, my lord."

"One ought to be able to sleep here. Ever lie awake, tossin' about?"

"Not often."

"Beastly—perfectly beastly. But I was always a bit of an owl."

"You look owlish," thought Quinney. He had a vision of his host flitting here and there by night, ready to pounce upon anything and everything. As a purchaser he had, indeed, pounced upon everything at D'Avenant, taking over nearly all the furniture and pictures and some rare plate.

"You and I, Mr. Quinney, must make this place a museum."

Quinney rubbed his hands at the delightful prospect.

"There isn't much rubbish, my lord."

"I take your word for that. I have expert knowledge of Oriental porcelain and Chinese lacquer. How long will you be over the oak?"

"That is quite impossible to say."

"I shall be here."

"You are retiring from business, my lord?"

"Retiring? I? Not much! But I can attend to my business from this room. It's a funny business, Mr. Quinney. I deal with funny people. I lived my life in China. I can pass for a Chink. Not much making-up necessary."

"You'll never pass for a D'Avenant," thought Quinney.

"I shall give you a cup of tea presently. I dare say you'll want to look round by yourself. See you later."

Quinney got up, nodded, and went out.

Alone, he wandered through the house, and then into the park. The village lay half a mile away, and he remembered that he had forgotten to bring tobacco. His mixture, however, could be bought at any inn. He decided to walk into the village.

Very soon he was passing through fine wrought-iron gates which, somewhat to his astonishment, had to be unlocked. A rosy-cheeked maiden informed him demurely that such were his lordship's orders. Quinney laughed.

"No admittance—except on business, my dear."

"Yes, sir. That's it. The villagers are rather miffed about it. There is talk of a right-of-way. But his lordship won't hear of that."

In the village more information was gleaned from the Boniface of the D'Avenant Arms. His lordship kept himself to himself, being rarely seen outside his own park. All the same, he subscribed liberally to local charities and paid high wages. Everybody hoped and believed that he would turn out to be an up-to-date and enlightened landlord of a much-impoverished estate.

Quinney strolled back to the house in time for tea, served in egg-shell china cups, infused for one minute and three-quarters only.

"You have never tasted such tea as that, Mr. Quinney?"

Quinney admitted that he had not a palate for the rarest growths of tea, adding that it would be a pleasure to drink hot water out of such cups.

"Loot," said his host, in a high-pitched voice. "I annexed 'em from a mandarin under sentence of death. I've picked up a lot of loot in my time."

He began to talk about porcelain of the earlier dynasties. Quinney was delighted. Then the old fellow showed him a couple of specimens, masterpieces of handicraft—a five-clawed dragon of the Ming period that probably had belonged to an emperor, and a superlative kylin.

"My best things are in the bedroom. Like to see 'em?"

The old man jumped up with the agility of a monkey, waving prehensile fingers.

"I'm going to surprise you," he said.

Quinney followed him into the bedroom. Against the wall was a big steel cage. Lord D'Avenant touched a button, and immediately the cage was brilliantly illuminated.

Quinney gasped.

The cage was full of magnificent pieces of Chinese porcelain. The mere sight of them seemed to rejuvenate Lord D'Avenant. He gripped Quinney's arm.

"I have had two passions in my life: collecting the best Chinese porcelain, and this place. Some fools think I'm not a true D'Avenant. But I am. I saw this house when I was a boy, and I said to myself: 'I'll have that, one day.' Now—look at my stuff."

"There's nothing better in the Salting Collection."

Lord D'Avenant snorted.

"There's nothing half so good."

At the end of twenty minutes, Quinney asked an interesting question:—

"Are you insured against burglars, my lord?"

The old man cackled, rubbing together his thin brown fingers. Then he said, impressively:—

"I can charge that cage and those steel shutters"—he pointed to the window—"with a high voltage that would electrocute any burglar who touched 'em. I've had to protect myself, Mr. Quinney, against enemies." Again he cackled, adding slyly, "It isn't very healthy to be an enemy of mine."

When they returned to the library, a Chinaman, in spotless white, was removing the teacups. He presented the usual impassive countenance to the "white devil" of a foreigner, but when he left the room his master spoke of him with something approximating to affection.

"My servant, Quong. The most faithful fellow in the world. He has been with me for years. I saved his life; saved him from a hideous death. He is devoted to me. He has stolen for me, Mr. Quinney. If I told him to kill you, he would nod his head, and your number would be up."

This was said with an air of such conviction that Quinney experienced a thrill—the first of many. Quong reappeared. He moved slowly and silently. D'Avenant spoke to him twice, not in pidgin English, but in the Cantonese dialect. As he vanished again, the old man said, with finality:—

"He is the only man, Mr. Quinney, whom I trust unreservedly."

III.

FOR several days Quinney saw little of his new patron. Meals were served to the dealer in his own sitting-room. Twice he was invited to drink tea in the library. Upon the second occasion an incident took place that must be recorded. A telephone on the big desk began to buzz.

"London call," said Lord D'Avenant. "Please excuse me."

As he spoke he picked up the instrument. Quinney happened to be facing him. By this time the dealer was accustomed to his queer host's ugliness, and kindly-disposed to an old man who had been consistently courteous to him. Suddenly, without warning, the evil that was in the yellow, lined countenance seemed to disfigure it. Quinney hardly recognized a harsh, querulous voice.

"Most certainly not. I refuse emphatically to see the man. He knows why. Tell him to go to the devil."

He replaced the instrument and turned to Quinney.

"If he goes to the devil, Mr. Quinney, he will find himself in congenial company. Let me give you another cup of tea."

Quinney, tingling with curiosity, remained silent. Before he returned to his labours, Quong came in. Immediately Lord D'Avenant began to speak with marked agitation. And then, for the first time, the Oriental mask fell from the face of the Chinaman. Evidently he, too, was agitated. Quinney, of course, couldn't understand a word that was said. He divined that orders, very peremptory orders, were being given. Quong inclined his head, like a mandarin, and withdrew. So did Quinney.

IV.

A WEEK later Lord D'Avenant was dead.

Quinney was half-dozing when a sharp knocking aroused him at half-past seven in the morning. The elderly housemaid came in, much flustered. Quong had found his master's door locked—as usual—and could not get in.

"He thinks, sir, that something awful has happened."

Afterwards Quinney admitted to Susan that the same dismal apprehension laid a strangle-hold on his vitals. Within a minute he had joined the frightened servants in the passage. He strode to the door of the bedroom and hammered upon it.

"Send for a gardener. We must break in."

A man appeared with a cold chisel and a hammer, but the stout oak door withstood for a time a severe assault. Quinney, ablaze with excitement, was the first to enter. Lord D'Avenant was not in bed, but the sheets and coverlets were disarranged. The steel cage was brilliantly illuminated. Quinney held up his hand.

"Don't go near the cage or the windows!"

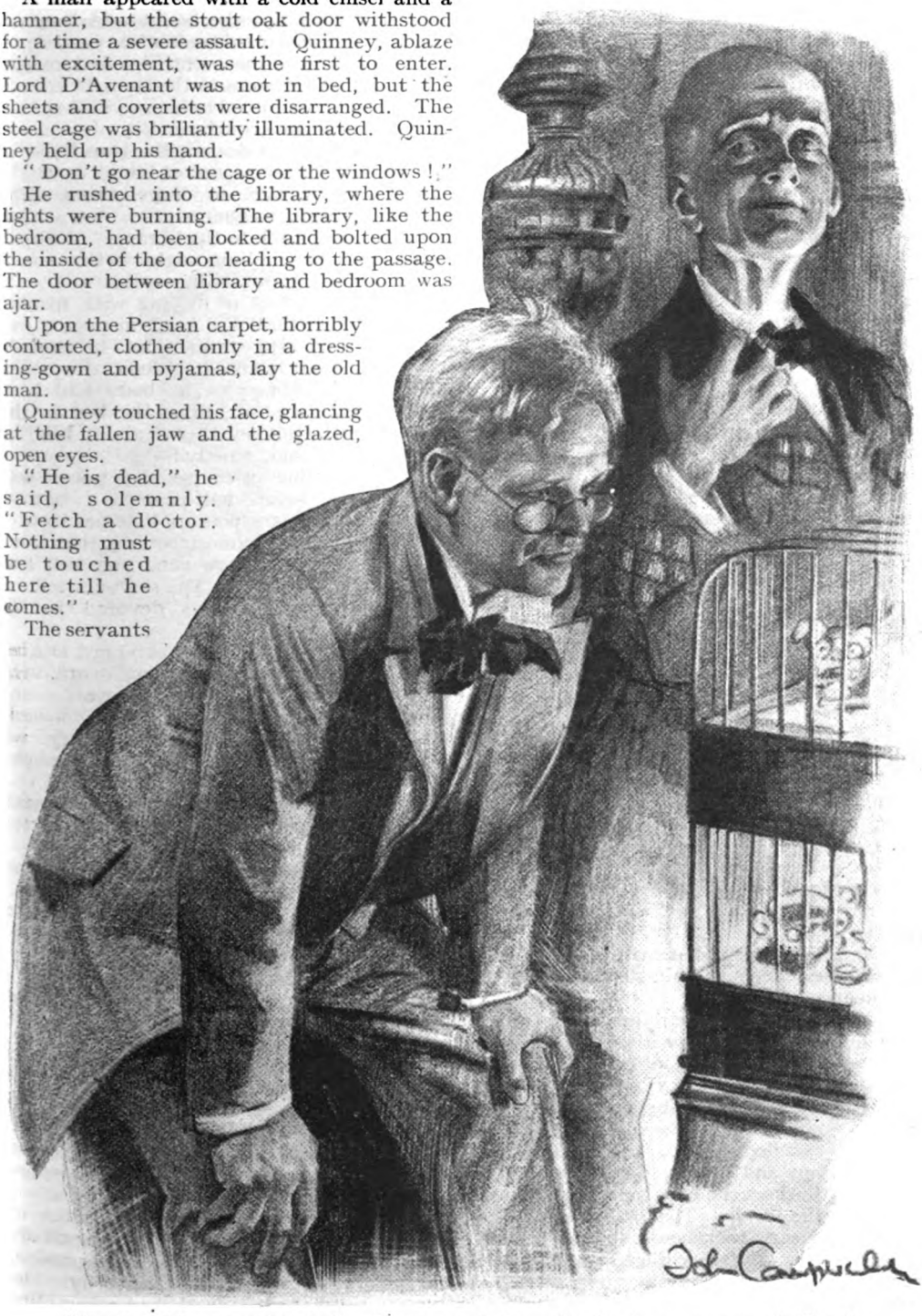
He rushed into the library, where the lights were burning. The library, like the bedroom, had been locked and bolted upon the inside of the door leading to the passage. The door between library and bedroom was ajar.

Upon the Persian carpet, horribly contorted, clothed only in a dressing-gown and pyjamas, lay the old man.

Quinney touched his face, glancing at the fallen jaw and the glazed, open eyes.

"He is dead," he said, solemnly. "Fetch a doctor. Nothing must be touched here till he comes."

The servants



"Lord D'Avenant touched a button, and immediately the cage was brilliantly illuminated."

filed out. Quinney went back into the bedroom and looked at the steel cage. With his amazing memory, he could almost swear that no precious object had been touched. He remarked, indeed, that one or two pieces had been added to the collection. The steel shutters guarding the windows were closed; the room, save the bed, was in order. Then he went out, leaving the gardener in charge of the shattered door, with instructions to allow nobody to pass through it. Quong, standing apart from the maids, was moaning. Quinney went up to him.

"Your master," he said, "must have felt ill in the night. He went into the library, and died."

Quong gesticulated violently.

"He velly strong man. He no die. I sabee. Man kill him. I tellee you, man kill him."

The doctor arrived. He was able to affirm positively that death had taken place some hours previously. He stated also that he had examined Lord D'Avenant very thoroughly about a month before, having been called in to prescribe for insomnia.

"A month ago my patient was as sound a man physically as a man of his age can be. He lived very temperately. We must send for the police at once."

The local inspector was summoned, a man of intelligence and capacity. The doctor and he knew what to do, and did it. Quinney tried to choke down some breakfast.

At about ten the inspector sent for him. Quinney found him and the doctor in the dining-room.

"Lord D'Avenant didn't die a natural death," said the inspector. "You have seen much of him of late, Mr. Quinney. Has he given you any indication whatever that life had become tedious to him?"

"Very much the contrary. I have never met a man of his age with such astonishing vitality."

"Quite so. Dr. Merriman thinks that poison has been administered or self-administered."

"Not self-administered, inspector," said Quinney. "I'd stake my life on that."

"We shall know more after the autopsy. The Chinese servant was the last to see his master alive. He left him at ten-thirty in his bedroom. It appears to have been a whim of the deceased to bolt himself in. The bedroom and library doors, communicating with the corridor, were locked and bolted on the inside. That is certain. The windows in each room were shuttered with steel shutters. Between the hours of eleven at night and seven in the morning a terrific voltage of electricity charges these shutters and the cage in the bedroom. It is humanly certain that no person could have entered either room through the window. The chimneys are very narrow. I have examined carefully the walls, the floors, and the ceilings. There is no evidence of any struggle. Snow fell during the night, but before ten. There are no footsteps in the snow below the windows. I am forced to believe that suicide is the only logical conclusion."

"The Chinaman doesn't think so."

"I can get nothing out of him."

The doctor had to leave them. The inspector turned to Quinney.

"I'm going back to the library. Will you come with me? You might notice something, anything, out of the ordinary."

Quinney, no fool in dealing with his fellows, decided that the local inspector was free, at any rate, from what he termed "swank." He followed the official upstairs and into the library. The body had been laid, beneath a sheet, upon the bed in the next room. Quinney stared about him, as the inspector said, quietly:—

"It is possible, of course, that poison was administered before half-past ten; but by whom? There are poisons that act slowly. In that case, it is almost certain that Lord D'Avenant would have rung the bell and summoned assistance. The servants tell me that the Chinaman was devoted to his master."

"Who saved him from what Lord D'Avenant described to me as a hideous death. He trusted Quong—I quote his words—unreservedly."

"In a murder case, Mr. Quinney, we always look for motives. Such a man might have had enemies."

Quinney repeated what Lord D'Avenant had said about his enemies. The inspector made a note.

"How does the doctor know that he was poisoned?"

"There were indications unmistakable to a medical man."

"Who switches on the electricity?"

"The electrician had his instructions. He switched on the current at ten-thirty, and turned it off, as usual, at a few minutes past seven. I know the man personally."

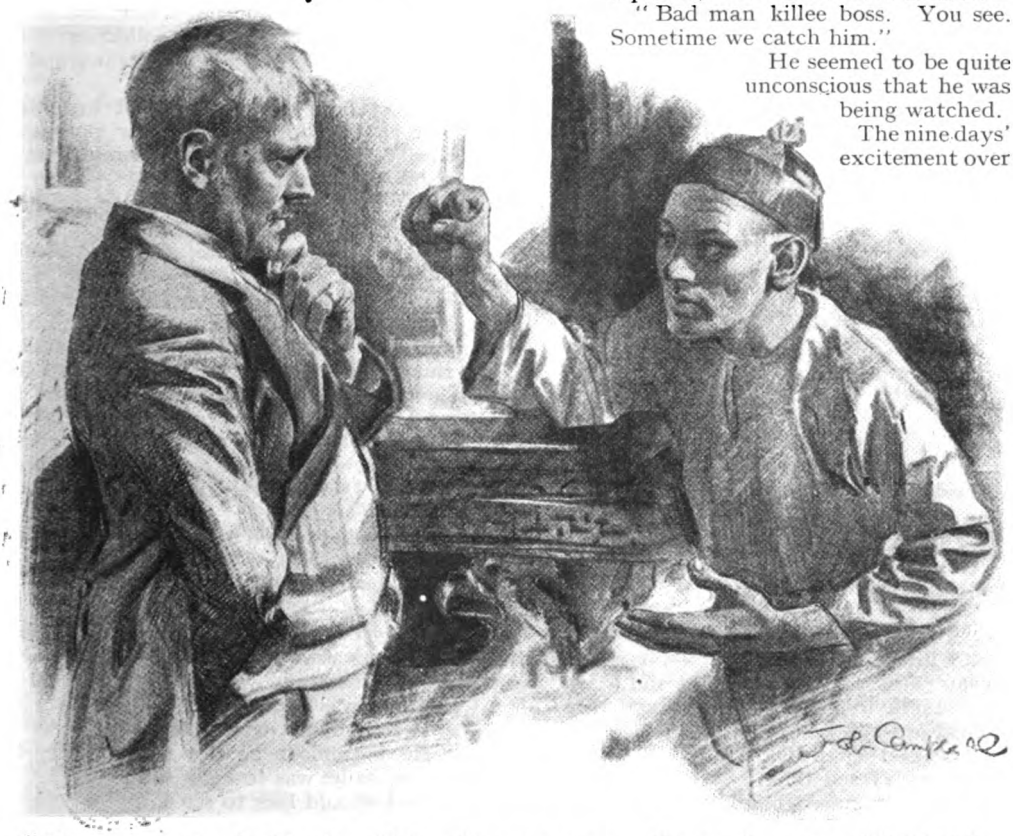
"It must be suicide," said Quinney; but, in his bones, he didn't believe it.

V.

HOME OFFICE experts conducted the *post-mortem*, confirming the conjecture of Dr. Merriman.

At the coroner's inquest a verdict of suicide whilst of unsound mind was mercifully recorded. No other verdict seemed possible. No phial was found near the body. The experts testified that death had taken place after midnight, and that so violent a poison must have acted swiftly. Nobody could

have entered the room after half-past ten. Nevertheless the junior partners of Davenant and Co. testified against the hypothesis of suicide. But they had to admit that the late head of the firm was odd and eccentric, and that they knew him only slightly. Since his return from China business matters were left, for the most part, in the hands of the London representatives. Still, he had talked to them frequently of his plans for the future. All his long life, they admitted reluctantly, he had been a man of mystery.



"Quong gesticulated violently. 'He velly strong man. He no die. Man kill him.'"

To the immense surprise of everybody, and most of all to the individual concerned, Lord D'Avenant left everything—apart from a few legacies and a substantial annuity to Quong—to the impoverished kinsman from whom he had bought Old Hall. That lucky youth immediately instructed Quinney to proceed with the restoration-work.

This young man, Arthur D'Avenant, said to Quinney at their first meeting :—

"There is a mystery here, Mr. Quinney."

Quinney agreed.

"I sha'n't rest till it is solved."

Meanwhile, inevitably, the suspicions of an egregious public fastened themselves upon the faithful Quong. But from the moment when the Chinaman learnt that his master's possessions had passed to a kinsman, he seemed to transfer his allegiance to that young man.

"I believe with you," said Arthur D'Avenant, "that Quong is absolutely innocent. At the same time, I have a notion that we may find the murderer through him. How, I haven't the least idea."

Quong, unhappily, could only repeat, like a parrot, what he had said at first:—

"Bad man killee boss. You see. Sometime we catch him."

He seemed to be quite unconscious that he was being watched. The nine days' excitement over the mystery died out when the experts were unable to find any trace of poison in the organs examined. Dr. Merriman said to Quinney :—

"This may be a case of Oriental revenge. We know nothing of their methods."

At the inquest Quinney repeated what he had overheard Lord D'Avenant saying over the telephone. But this slightest of clues ended in moonshine. One of the London partners had been at the London end. He, in his turn, testified that the senior member of the firm refused consistently to see importunate visitors. This particular visitor,

whom he recalled perfectly, happened to be a sailor, once in Lord D'Avenant's service and discharged from it. He was now on the high seas again. Thereupon Quong was recalled to the witness-box. Did he know this sailor, or anything about him? Quong, impassive as a graven image, shook his head, repeating: "I no sabee," till he was invited to stand down. Quinney thought to himself: "I wonder if the Chink is lying."

VI.

THE work of restoring the old oak went on slowly. Quinney returned to London and his Susan. The D'Avenant mystery was transmuted by the irony of things into an immense "ad." for the Soho Square establishment. All and sundry "popped in" to buy "bits" and ask for first-hand information. They got both. Susan became very unhappy.

"Joe," she said, solemnly, "we're making money out of this horror; yes, we are."

"If you feel that way, old dear," replied her lord, "you needn't spend any of it."

"You ought to give all of it to my Waifs and Strays."

"What a Waif and Stray you'd be, if it wasn't for me!"

Amongst these curious visitors came Benyon, the explorer. He drifted into the shop when Quinney happened to be reasonably at leisure. Benyon beat no bushes. He said, curtly:—

"I am one of the few men, Mr. Quinney, who knew the late Lord D'Avenant."

Quinney pricked up his ears, as Benyon continued, placidly:—

"I met him in China."

"You know China, sir?"

"I know parts of China as—as well, shall I say?—as Lord D'Avenant did. He was an assiduous collector. Where are his collections?"

"At D'Avenant Old Hall."

"Could I see them? This is my card." As Quinney stared blankly at an unfamiliar name, the great man added, quietly: "I think the secretary of the Royal Geographical Society will vouch for me."

Quinney said, briskly:—

"That's quite all right, Mr. Benyon. I happen to be going down to D'Avenant the day after to-morrow. Will you come with me?"

"With great pleasure."

And so it came to pass that Benyon, by a mere coincidence, so said Quinney, met Arthur D'Avenant. Benyon was taken to the drawing-room, where two cabinets held all the finest bits.

"I knew that they were wonderful," he murmured.

Further talk soon convinced Quinney that an expert of the first rank was in his company, and he hastened, as usual, to profit by such an opportunity.

"Some of these," said Benyon, "have a value quite apart from what they might fetch at Christie's as rare specimens of the earlier dynasties. I cannot imagine how D'Avenant got hold of them. Is there an illustrated catalogue of your treasures?" He turned to the young man.

"I am thinking of having one made—with Mr. Quinney's kind assistance. If—if you would help us, Mr. Benyon——?"

Benyon said deliberately:—

"If you wish to keep this collection intact, Mr. D'Avenant, *don't* have it catalogued!"

"Why ever not?"

"I can only say this out of knowledge which is, perhaps, my peculiar possession. No bribe, however great, would tempt me to carry *that* through Tibet."

He indicated a highly-decorated Buddhist figure.

"It is sacrosanct," he added. "And so are these."

"But we are not in Tibet, Mr. Benyon."

"Happily, we are not in Tibet."

No more was said at the moment. After a time, Benyon observed, abruptly: "It's an extraordinary thing to me that the late Lord D'Avenant committed suicide."

Arthur D'Avenant turned startled eyes to Quinney, who shrugged his sturdy shoulders.

Arthur D'Avenant dropped his pleasant voice to a whisper.

"Mr. Quinney and I dispute the coroner's verdict. We—we believe that my predecessor was—murdered."

"Yes," said Quinney.

"Why have you come to that conclusion?"

The facts were recited. Benyon made no comment, listening very attentively, till the Chinaman was mentioned.

"Is this man, Quong, here?"

"He is almost as devoted to me, Mr. Benyon, as he was to his master."

"I—I should like to see him."

Quong was summoned. Immediately Benyon addressed him in the Cantonese dialect. Quinney listened, mildly amused, to the strangest concatenation of astounding and inarticulate noise. But he noticed that Quong seemed pleased and less of an image. Evidently he accepted Benyon as a superior being. At a sign from the distinguished traveller he bowed and went out.

"Well?" murmured Arthur D'Avenant.

Benyon smiled, rather inscrutably.

"It *is* well," he said, with emphasis. "I was not quite easy when I heard there was a Cantonese here. This man was his master's slave. Probably he is now yours. Might I see the library? It would be interesting—and possibly profitable—to attempt some

reconstruction of this mysterious affair on the spot."

"The library," said D'Avenant, "has been shut up. Nothing has been touched since the tragedy."

They went upstairs. Later, Quinney told Susan that he was tingling with suppressed excitement. He expected, somehow, that something would happen, that the keen eyes of Benyon would detect what had escaped other eyes. He was not altogether disappointed.

The room was unlocked and unshuttered.

"He lay there," said Quinney, "with his knees arched. The pupils of the eyes were so turned up that only the whites were visible."

"Ah! And nothing was found near him—no phial, no object that might be even remotely considered—lethal?"

"Nothing."

BENYON sat down, thinking furiously, half-closing his eyes. The others respected his silence. When, at length, he spoke, his voice seemed to float from a distance, as if, in fancy, he were far away.

"I told you that I knew Lord D'Avenant," he began. "But I didn't know him well. Probably nobody knew him well, except, possibly, the faithful Quong."

"He was assuredly a very queer customer, Mr. Benyon."

"From what knowledge I had of him," continued Benyon, "it is grossly improbable that such a man, familiar as he must have been with rare and subtle drugs, should have taken a violent poison that contorted the body almost beyond recognition. Had he wished to kill himself, he would have selected some preparation of opium, and slid out of life easily and painlessly. There is a subtle poison known to me that produces the effects you have described, Mr. Quinney, and which leaves no trace in the human system."

"A poison known to you?"

"Did the doctors discover any puncture?"

"I don't think so."

"The poison to which I refer is administered hypodermically. A slight prick from a needle suffices. It doesn't act immediately. The prick may be so slight that the person pricked may be unconscious of it. The mark left would be hardly perceptible except to a very trained eye. The poison I mean has some of the characteristics of that extraordinary South American alkaloid, wourali. It paralyzes action and heightens sensation. The sufferer undergoes tortures and is unable to move or cry out."

"Horrible!" ejaculated Quinney.

Benyon's eyes turned to the desk.

"What are those packages?"

"They were carefully examined," said Quinney. "They hold samples—odds and ends."

"You can examine them, Mr. Benyon," suggested D'Avenant.

Benyon did so, moving thin brown fingers delicately. He touched many commonplace objects with extreme care.

"You are on the track of something?" exclaimed the young man.

Benyon paused.

"This is my opinion," he said slowly. "I agree with you that Lord D'Avenant was murdered. Probably the police thought as much, and discreetly kept their thoughts to themselves. Scotland Yard dislikes unsolved mysteries. I can imagine that the verdict of the coroner's jury was not displeasing. I take it that the cleverest wits were baffled. Nobody entered this room or the bedroom. The late lord was alone when he died, alone when he was murdered. We fall back upon hypothesis. I submit that he was poisoned hypodermically. It is conceivable that an enemy, unable to get at him in any other way, sent him, by post, some tiny, insignificant article that a collector would be likely to handle. In handling it he met his death. I am looking for that insignificant article."

He went on looking, but he didn't find it. The same disappointment awaited him in the bedroom. Finally, he stood in front of the steel cage, now empty.

"You say this was lit up when you broke into the bedroom, Mr. Quinney?"

"Yes."

"We may infer that the unhappy man, perhaps unable to sleep, got out of bed——"

"He had been in bed."

"We may imagine that he got out of bed, and was gloating over his treasures?"

"I often do that," admitted Quinney.

"Then he passed into the library and began a letter. Whilst he was writing he may have felt the first effect of the poison. In less than a minute he would be paralyzed. In ten more minutes he would be dead."

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed Quinney.

Benyon continued, imperturbably:—

"I should like to call your attention to another hypothesis. You may take it from me that some of the porcelain in the drawing-room is of supreme historical and religious interest. I can't convey to you the fanatic attachment that certain objects inspire in their possessors. The happiness and prosperity, perhaps, of a remote community may be actually centred in one ugly little figure. If such a figure were stolen from its guarded shrine, the devotees would stick at nothing, at *nothing*, to recover it. The quest might extend over years."

Arthur D'Avenant looked slightly uneasy.

"Let us suppose that an agent, the last

"Quinney switched on the electrics at the door. In front of one of the cabinets——

man you might suspect, was instructed to recover such an object known to be in the possession of a man who guarded it like a Crown jewel. Would he hesitate to kill that man, if he thought that his successor might guard it less carefully?"

"This," said Arthur D'Avenant, with a hard laugh, "is getting near the knuckle."

Benyon delivered the last thrust.

"I believe," he said slowly, "that the murderer of Lord D'Avenant will come here. You need not seek him. I should be sorely tempted, knowing what I do, to let him help himself and go his way."

"Never!" said D'Avenant.

Benyon smiled and spread out his hands.

"It has been a most interesting afternoon," he murmured.

VII.

ARTHUR D'AVENANT, being a young and healthy man, soon dismissed from an active mind the apprehensions excited by the explorer. He happened to be in love; approaching marriage with a charming girl engrossed his attention.

And nothing happened!

Quinney finished the oak. He was now regarded affectionately by Arthur D'Avenant as a friend, and as such heartily welcome to come and go as he pleased.

He went down, one week-end, with a superb Cromwellian table, to find a bride at home after her honeymoon. Quinney had met the young lady before. He told Susan that she was real porcelain, and prettily decorated.

Arthur D'Avenant led him aside.

"I'm worried about Quong, Mr. Quinney."

"Ho! What's up?"

"He is—at all hours of the night. I can get nothing out of him but this. He tells me that the 'bad man' is coming. It seems to be mere intuition, but these Chinks are uncanny. For instance, I wasn't expecting you, but before I got your wire yesterday, Quong said to me: 'Quinnee—he come. You see.' And here you are, b'Jove!"

Quinney took this seriously.

"This beats me, Mr. D'Avenant. After our talk with Mr. Benyon I began to wonder whether Quong had stayed on with you because he hoped that the 'bad man' would come back."

"Quite likely," admitted D'Avenant.

"By the way," observed the bridegroom, "before I brought Aline here I went over every blighting object in those two rooms—a very tedious job. If Benyon's hypothesis holds any water, it would be too awful if my darling girl picked up the thing that did the mischief. However, the two rooms are still locked up."

"Quite sound," said Quinney.

"The infernal thing couldn't be anywhere else, could it?"

"No," said Quinney. Then, not quite

sincerely, but moved by the anxiety of the young man, he said, lightly :—

" I wouldn't worry, Mr. D'Avenant. Mr. Benyon was just guessing. A bitter enemy may have had his revenge. If so, he'll not bother you."

" I tell myself that, but I'm not quite sure about it."

" Does Mrs. D'Avenant know what we know ? "

" No ; she accepts the general verdict."

Presently Quinney got Quong alone, and took his arm.

" What's wrong with you, old chap ? "

Quong said, excitedly :—

" Bad man come velly soon. I sabee. You bet ! "

" But how do you know ? "

Quong's pidgin English became involved.

" He—sailor-man. He come back. He wantee something. I no sabee what. Allee same, he come."

" And then—— ? "

Quong burst out laughing, not a pleasant laugh.

" He catchee — me. You see."

" I hope I shall," said Quinney.

Over their wine, after Mrs. D'Avenant had left the dining-room, Arthur spoke again of Quong.

" He is scaring the maids with his nocturnal prowlings."

" Let him prowl ! "

" It's the deuce to keep maids in the country ; and this house is so remote."

" I have faith in Quong," said Quinney.

That very night, his faith was abundantly justified.

Quong tapped upon his bedroom door about an hour after midnight. Quinney let him in. He hardly recognized the man. He seemed to be vibrating with excitement, as he whispered :—

" Bad man—he come. Now I catch him ! "

" With your naked hands ? " exclaimed Quinney.

Quong looked at his hands and smiled.

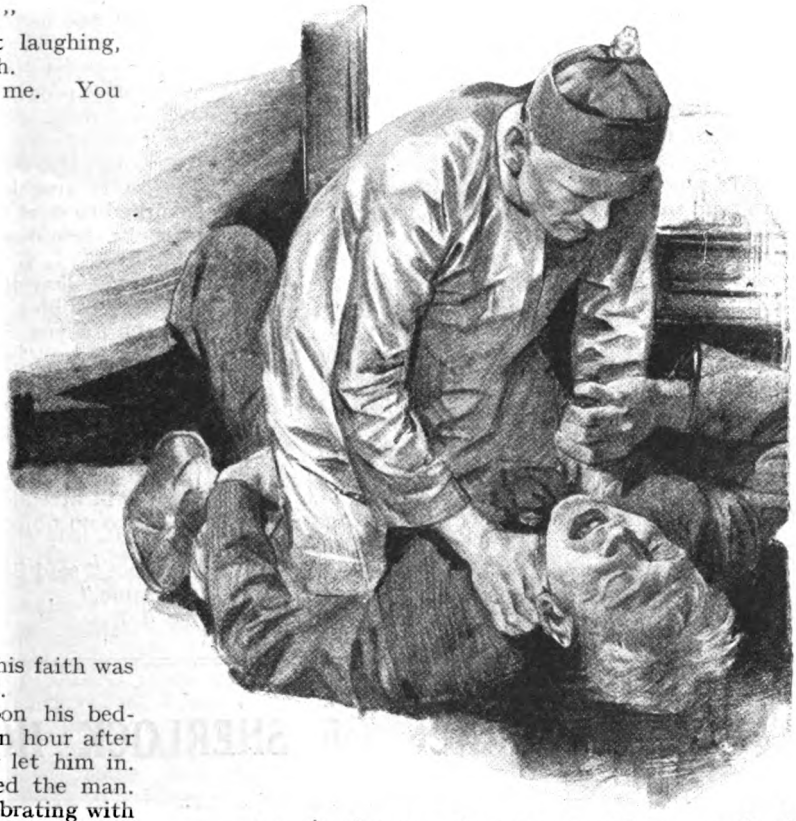
" You likee come too ? "

For answer, Quinney slipped a coat over his pyjamas. Then he picked up a serviceable poker. Quong smiled again.

" I catch him ! You see."

He seemed to float out of the room—a white wraith. Quinney followed. Moonlight illumined the long corridor, thickly carpeted. Quong sped down the stairs and into the great hall. He paused, finger upon lip, opposite the door of the drawing-room.

Noiselessly the Chinaman turned the handle of the door, and vanished. Quinney hesitated for one brief instant. He could see that the drawing-room was not altogether in darkness. The swiftness of the Oriental's movements disconcerted him. He followed slowly, on tiptoe. As he entered he heard a crash. Instantly, Quinney switched on the electrics at the door. In front of one of the cabinets, two men lay upon the parquet. Silence succeeded the crash, and then a curious wheezing sound. Quinney realized that Quong was strangling the " bad man."



——two men lay upon the parquet. Quinney realized that Quong was strangling the 'bad man.'"

He flung himself upon Quong, trying to tear the steel fingers from a thick throat.

Quinney had strong muscles, but he had to strain them to the uttermost.

Suddenly the hold relaxed.

"God! You've killed him!"

Quong laughed, and stood up. Then, bending swiftly, he ran his fingers over the man's body. He held up a pistol.

"I tellee you, he velly bad man. I sabee."

Very slowly, the prostrate man recovered consciousness. Quinney left him alone.

"Give me the pistol," he said to Quong, "and go you and fetch your boss."

Quong nodded gleefully and slipped away.

Quinney saw that the glass door of the bigger cabinet had been broken open. Upon a table stood the small figure that Benyon was not anxious to carry through Tibet.

"You lie perfectly still," said Quinney.

The man was gasping convulsively, but he lay crumpled up just where he had fallen.

D'Avenant came in, followed by the still smiling Quong.

VIII.

QUINNEY may be trusted to finish the story in his own fashion, as he told it to the awe-stricken Susan some twenty-four hours later.

"He was a queer cove, my girl; a dark, seafaring man, with gold rings in his ears. He could speak to Quong in his own lingo, and did so when he got back his powers of speech. They went at it hammer-and-tongs, jabbering like monkeys. We had his pistol, and we were three to one. Perhaps we ought to have tied him up till the police came. Anyway, we didn't. I told you that the door of the cabinet was open. Upon the middle shelf stood a small Kang-He god, villainously ugly, coloured in bright turquoise. The mouth of the little beast was wide open. I particularly noticed it when the pieces were removed from the steel cage, because it wasn't up to the mark of the other bits. But it was in the cage, and we supposed that it was intended to be put there. But, oddly enough, I didn't remember seeing it when his lordship first showed me his treasures. Quong says that it must have been acquired in England, because he knows all the bits that came from China. As I was saying, Susie, we were taking a bit of an easy before sending for the police, and I suppose our man knew that the game was up. He jumped for the cabinet and grabbed the bright blue god or devil. And I saw him jab his thumb hard into the little beast's mouth.

"Well, my dear, we had to send for a doctor before we sent for the police. When they came our man was dead, drawn up and contorted, too. He died game, I must say. And when we got the blue monster out of his hand he owned up. He had worked for Lord D'Avenant in China. He had helped to steal the little figure from some Buddhist shrine. Afterwards, I dare say, he tried blackmail. Anyway, he got the sack. He boasted to us that he had sworn to kill his former master, and he had the devilish art of knowing how to do it. Collectors always stick their fingers into holes, just to see if the inside is polished properly. Bad bits are left in the rough. Inside the mouth of the blue beast he fixed a needle coated with that devilish poison. Mr. Benyon was right from first to last. Having killed his enemy, the man attempted to steal the figure. He knew what price he would get for it in China. That's about all."

"Mercy me!" exclaimed Susan. "This comes of worshipping sticks and stones. What a lesson for you, Joe!"

"I don't steal 'em," said Quinney.

"I wouldn't trust you," sighed Susan, "nor any other collector."

"Mr. D'Avenant," concluded Quinney, wiping a heated brow, "is a-going to send back the little mischief-maker to China. Mr. Benyon will attend to that. And now, Susie, if you've no objections, I shall take a glass of sherry."

"I do object," said Susan, "but you'll do it just the same."

And he did.

REAPPEARANCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES!

DO NOT MISS

"The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone,"

by SIR A. CONAN DOYLE,

In next Month's "Strand Magazine."

by
A·B·WALKLEY

IN a world of kaleidoscopic and catastrophic changes it would be natural to expect some enfeeblement, if not a total extinction, of the human passion for "First Nights." Strange to say, it seems as strong as ever. The time is out of joint, our drama is at its lowest ebb, but an eager curiosity still impels people to first performances of new plays. They are mainly the same people—the old gang, if I may apply the politician's phrase without disrespect—only a little balder, a little more rotund, a little more highly rouged, than they were. In the course of three or more decades (let me leave it discreetly vague), I have seen the same first-nighters pass from blooming youth to ripe maturity and withered age. I have offered them the same melancholy spectacle. But we all try to put a good face on it. What I cannot understand is why *they* keep it up. Theatrical critics go to first nights because they must. But the other people, who are not on compulsory service, surely might give themselves a rest?

But it seems also there is a distinct tribe of second-nighters. I have never been allowed to see them myself, but there is positive evidence on the point from Mr. Max Beerbohm. He tells us (in "Seven Men") that, when he was dramatic critic for the *Saturday Review*, "weary of meeting the same lot of people again and again at first nights, I had recently sent a circular to the managers, asking that I might have seats for second nights instead." Thereupon he made a strange discovery. "I found that there existed as distinct and invariable a lot of second-nighters as of first-nighters. The second-nighters were less 'showy'; but then they came more to see than to be seen, and there was an air that I liked of earnestness and hopefulness about them. I used to write a good deal about the future of the British drama, and they, for their part, used to think and talk a good deal about it. Though second-nighters do come to see, they remain rather to hope and pray." While, as I say, I really know nothing about these second-nighters, I fully recognize that theatrical critics can do no less than regard them with affectionate respect, for manifestly they are the people who have waited for the "notices." They must be one's (or somebody else's) "gentle readers."

It has been periodically proposed that "first nights" shall become "second nights"—I mean, that the first night or *première* should be preceded, on the Parisian plan, by a *répétition générale* or public dress rehearsal, which the Press should attend, only holding over its "notices" for a day. I don't think our theatrical managers will ever be so guileless as to fall in with this scheme. To name only one objection, it would give the critics time to think. Anyone who compares the "notices" in the dailies with those in the weeklies or the monthlies will at once see what that means. The more belated the criticism, the less kindly it is sure to be. Time to think is time to spot weak places and to pick holes, time to cool down from your first fine careless rapture, time to think out what can be said on the other side. I know, for I have been, before now, a daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly critic of the same plays, and found myself getting more and more captious at every remove. I am all, then, for our present first-night system. I will cheerfully go on seeing my old friends (and letting my old friends see me) exhibiting deeper and deeper marks of the ravages of time. Besides, some first nights *are* really worth attending, interesting for their own sake, more interesting than any other nights. A few are even memorable.

MY mind goes back to a first night of nearly thirty years ago, at the St. James's, a May night in 1893, which was one of the most notable *premières* in the history of the modern English stage. The early 'nineties mark a period in that history of considerable ferment. The more intelligent—or the more sanguine—lovers of the drama were, like Mr. Beerbohm's second-nighters, hoping and praying. Several of Ibsen's plays had lately been performed in London and had been a revelation if they were not to be, as some confidently predicted, a revolution. The work of a master-mind and, what is more, of a born dramatist, they offered people weary of the old theatrical inanities a new sensation—food for thought about life, the social fabric, and themselves. Their influence was by no means purely æsthetic—and here was the secret of their vogue as well as of their early passing—they "rhymed to" so many social and ethical aspirations and currents of their time which violently interested people to whom the dramatic virtues of a play as a play, its purely artistic merits, were of minor or no importance. "Ibsenism" connoted many other things besides appreciation of a new and great dramatic artist and overflowed the boundaries of the playhouse, bearing on its flood a miscellaneous mob of feminists, socialists, revolutionists, all the cranks. But this notable influence on the theatre it had, that it made playgoers, whether they were "Ibsenites" or not, dissatisfied with the old formula and the old mechanism; a new spirit, a new demand was abroad. It was in this mood, conscious or unconscious, eagerly responsive or sullenly recalcitrant, that the audience met on that May night for the curtain to rise on "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." Mr. Pinero had delighted the town with a series of brilliant farces, illustrated by the comic genius of Mrs. John Wood, Arthur Cecil, John Clayton, and poor Rose Norreys. In "The Profligate" he had given a taste of different quality, serious, sternly moral, George Eliot-ish. But these were pre-Ibsenian; what could he do for the new spirit, the new demand?

MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL'S TRIUMPH.

What he did was, first of all, to provide a great part and an overwhelming personal success for a new actress. I remember Mrs. Patrick Campbell's earliest appearances at the Adelphi in a melodrama, "The Trumpet Call" (oh, the embarrassing accident to her dress on the first night!), and an absurd Cromwell play, and I am glad to remember, also, wondering in print why no West-end manager snapped up this precious treasure. But I might have been easy: she was soon snapped up by George Alexander. What a thrill went through the house when this beautiful, contralto-voiced, fascinatingly perverse creature stepped into Aubrey Tanqueray's dining-room, emptied of its guests, and pounced on the dessert with, "I love fruit, when it's expensive"! It would be tiresome now to follow her through all the sudden changes of a piece familiarly known to every playgoer. At the fall of the curtain she had established herself as a new histrionic "value," a new and potent instrument of interpretation, a new stage temperament.

But the play was something new, too. Not in its main *motif*. That was but a variant of what Paul Bourget has so well called "Redemptorism"—the attempt to redeem, to rehabilitate, a fallen woman, and its outcome—familiar enough in other plays of Augier and Dumas *fils*. But the realistic method, the absolute veracity of the thing, was new; the air of "inevitability" was new; the English social atmosphere was new. It was a serious moralistic treatment of what had hitherto been a romantic theme, just the treatment for which a public prepared, disillusioned with romance, by Ibsen was secretly yearning. I must not be understood as identifying Pinero's art with Ibsen's. The Norwegian master had his own supreme gift of limitless quasi-poetic suggestion. The Englishman was positive, practical, prosaic—and also had his supreme gift of dramatic story-telling. But he had been quick to see

the change wrought in the public temper by the other, had perhaps experienced a spiritual change himself, and hence came forth that new thing, "Mrs. Tanqueray." The cheers that went up when the curtain fell! We had visions of a New Heaven and a New Earth. These excessive emotions go naturally with the high temperature of first nights. They do not last. Life could not be lived in a perpetual whirlwind of enthusiasm. But, putting the affair at its lowest and its coolest, it is certain that on that first night the English drama was "hatched again," in Mrs. Poyser's phrase, "and hatched different."

"I love fruit, when it's expensive!"

Mrs. Patrick Campbell as Paula Tanqueray.

AN angry crowd, with whatever excuse of a practical grievance, is an ugly thing. But what is even more odd than ugly is an English crowd angry over a question of literary taste! I am thinking of another first night at the St. James's, in January, 1895, when Henry James, gentlest, most retiring of men, was brutally hooted from the stage because the gallery had found his "Guy Domville" too delicate a morsel for their coarse palates. "Guy Domville" has never been published. (George Alexander sent me a privately printed copy at the time, but stipulated for its return.) Its theme was remote from every kind of "actuality"—an episode in the eighteenth century history of an old English Catholic family. The charm was wholly in the treatment, in the subtle "psychology" and dainty, rather alembicated, style of Henry James—an acquired taste at the best, and a taste never perhaps to be acquired by average galleryites.

There were leading parts for Alexander himself and Miss Marion Terry, and, if I remember aright, Miss Irene Vanbrugh made one of her early appearances in an ancillary *rôle*. But it was caviare to the general, and how the general signified its distaste at the curtain-fall the author himself described in a letter to his brother William. "In three words the delicate, picturesque, extremely human and extremely artistic little play was taken profanely by a brutal and ill-disposed gallery which had shown signs of malice prepense from the first and which, held in hand till the end, kicked up an infernal row at the fall of the curtain. There followed an abominable quarter of an hour during which all the forces of civilization in the house waged a battle of the most gallant, prolonged, and sustained applause with the hoots and jeers and catcalls of the roughs, whose *roars* (like those of a cage of beasts at some infernal 'Zoo') were only exacerbated (as it were) by the conflict. . . . The thing fills me with horror for the abysmal vulgarity and brutality of the theatre and its regular public which, God knows, I have loved intensely even when working (from motives as 'pure' as pecuniary motives *can* be) against it." This last wild cry of pain must be forgiven to a man who had been publicly insulted. The real truth is, Henry James still continued to cherish a certain theatrical ambition, and was always reluctant to persuade himself that his peculiar qualities could never have a chance in that quarter. Years afterwards the Forbes-Robertsons produced his "High Bid," but it had little more than a success of esteem. "The Outcry" and "The Reprobate," both seen since his death, were successes merely of curiosity. In his later days he was not infrequently to be met in the stalls at London first nights. The stalls were his proper place, not the stage.

As I am picking out first nights with something exceptional to mark them, I pass over Irving's in the great Lyceum days, Tree's at the Haymarket and His Majesty's, and most of Alexander's at the St. James's. These were, of course, all brilliant social gatherings, and I leave it to the fashion reporters to do justice to them. Nor must I touch upon musical occasions, though I remember well the excitement that thrilled the Savoy audiences over the Gilbert and Sullivan productions and, particularly, the waxing and waning of Sir Arthur's eyeglass.

A MEMORABLE NEW YORK FIRST NIGHT.

Coming to more recent times, I find a notable first night at the opening of the New Theatre, New York, some ten or a dozen years ago. This theatre had been built by a group of millionaires, and was supposed in advance to be the last word in theatrical architecture. Invited by the founders to the inaugural ceremonies, I went over in the *Adriatic*, stayed for five crowded days of overwhelming hospitality, theatre-going, sight-seeing, and came back in the same ship. The new venture started with immense *éclat*. New York was going to have *the* theatre of the world. Mr. Ames, illustrious among theatrical "producers," was to be its director; my old friend John Corbin (once upon a time at Oxford), its literary adviser; the company was to be headed by Edward Sothern and Julia Marlowe. There was a formal opening ceremony in the afternoon, when I met among the people gathered together on the stage not only Brander Mathews, whom I had long known, but, for the first time, the white-haired veteran, W. D. Howells. After Mr. Pierpont Morgan had formally handed over the key of the building, there were two of the best speeches I have ever heard from a stage-platform, one by Senator Elihu Root, the other by the then Governor of New York State, whose name I am ashamed to have forgotten. But the joy of the afternoon was the delivery (not "in character") of Hamlet's address to the players by Forbes-Robertson to the actual players of the company grouped on the stage. It must have been a trying ordeal in such conditions, but the English actor, with his beautiful voice, his perfect diction, his characteristic air of persuasive amenity, came out of it triumphantly.

For the evening performance "Antony and Cleopatra" had been chosen. Scenically it was well enough, but by no means impeccable, histrionically. Mr. Sothern was the tamest of Antonys. (I remember cabling to the *Times* that the squirrels in Central Park might have eaten out of his hand.) He seemed intimidated, if not shocked, by the voluptuous endearments of Miss Marlowe's Cleopatra. The really interesting thing was the audience—the most brilliant, I think, in diamonds and in beauty (and I have been present at many "Gala" performances in Europe) that I have ever seen. But a super-"elegant" public is always apt to be a little cold. This one, however, had unfortunately practical reason for its coldness; it could only imperfectly hear. The millionaires had clubbed together. The finest site in New York had been chosen. *The* theatre of the world had been nobly planned, lavishly built, opened in state—and lo! the acoustics were all wrong! It was a sad disappointment. All sorts of remedies, I believe, were subsequently tried, but were ineffectual. The millionaires' toy had broken in the hand! For a few short months the theatre struggled on with the "legitimate," and then had to be given over to the illegitimate, to miscellaneous entertainments, circuses, I know not what. Nor do I know anything about its fate at the present moment.

PARISIAN first nights have a peculiar flavour. I had almost said, a peculiar scent. For French ladies, or, to be on the safe side, French ladies who attend the *répétitions générales*, have a passion for perfumes, and the Paris theatres are not, as a rule, ventilated in accordance with English notions. There is, in my experience, more "profession" apparent and less "society" in these dress-rehearsal audiences than at our London first nights. Notably is this the case at the Théâtre Français, where, exceptionally, to avoid a solution of continuity in the evening performances, the rehearsals take place in the afternoon. A Paris audience has the reputation of being the most critical of all. On that I can only say that I have heard as many inept remarks, as many of the usual trenchant summings-up and dismissals with a word, in Paris as elsewhere. I say the habit is "usual" with first-night audiences, because I confess to suffering under it. Nothing is so distracting to the theatrical critic who is trying quietly to take stock of his impressions and to arrive without haste at a considered, responsible judgment. People who are there merely to spend the evening want to profess an opinion on the spot, something they can whisper in the ears of their friends as they flit round the stalls. These hasty verdicts may be too favourable or too hostile, but they are sure to be superficial—the very thing the critic, poor man, is trying to guard against. I know that this unwritten criticism, the whispered comments, smiles, or shrugs of the audience, is what generally determines the fate of the play as a commercial "proposition." But the responsible critic is out for other game—he is after artistic

value, the relation of the play to other plays, to certain trains of thought, and so forth. When I speak of the responsible critic, I am thinking of his responsibility to his artistic ideals, to his esthetic creed, to his philosophy of literature and of life. The pity is, I cannot but think, that in some critics the sense of responsibility seems to be lacking. They seem to be swayed by the first-nighters around them, and to become in their "notices" the obedient servants to command of the facile man-of-the-worldisms and the cheap epigrams that enliven first-night chit-chat. Thus the unwritten criticism, so irresponsible, so offhand, so ostensibly shrewd and practical but so fundamentally unliterary and inartistic, tends to be echoed in the written, which then ceases to be criticism at all, in any valid sense of the term, and becomes mere hearsay, mere reporting. I assume the privilege of an old fogy to hint to these critics that they should take their art more seriously. I am not suggesting that they should become ponderous or pontifical—far from it—but that they should shut their ears to the buzz of first-nighters and make a solitude within themselves, so that no external irrelevancies may interfere with the free play of their own consciousness, their own appreciation of the work of art before them, their own principles and standards. This rigorous self-absorption in the midst of a crowd—and particularly a crowd brimming over with excitement, sociability, the desire for immediate utterance of no matter what, so long as it is "smart," about the play—is, I am well aware, a difficult discipline. And however scrupulously one refrains from being drawn into conversation about the play on first nights, what nonsense one cannot help overhearing! As I say, I have overheard as much nonsense at a Paris dress-rehearsal as at any first night elsewhere. Indeed, more, because the Paris inter-acts are longer and the public more talkative.

"An ill-disposed gallery kicked up an infernal row at the fall of the curtain."

THE MEMORABLE PRODUCTION OF "CHANTECLER."

I speak feelingly, having attended pretty continuously for some years dress-rehearsals of Hervieu, Donnay, Capus, Brieux, Bataille, and the rest. The most remarkable of all, as an "event," perhaps, was the production of Rostand's "Chantecler" at the Porte St. Martin in the midwinter of 1909-1910. It was the memorable winter of the Seine floods, when half Paris was under water. The great event had been promised frequently during the previous twelve months and had been again and again put off, until the postponement became a public joke. Various rumours were current. Rostand could not be got to put the finishing touches. Lucien Guitry was not happy about his part. Cynics said that it was all an advertising manœuvre. Anyhow, the excitement over the long-promised production grew and grew.

When the date was at last positively fixed, the prayers, the intrigues, the struggles for tickets were without precedent. Those who got tickets (Jean Coquelin sent me mine) treasured them as though they were a decoration. I remember that as we filed into the Porte St. Martin we were cheered, as though we were heroes, by an enormous crowd.

The fact is, Rostand was at the height of his fame. The world-triumph of "Cyrano" and of "L'Aiglon" had immensely gratified the patriotic pride of the French. Rostand had not only revived, and that in an age of pessimistic realism, the vogue of flamboyant romance, but he figured in the popular eye as the spokesman for France, the authoritative interpreter to the nations of the French spirit. "Chantecler," it had been given out, was to be the most brilliant modern expression of this spirit. Expectation raised to such a height could not but be disappointed. The play showed, what cooler critics had known all along, that Rostand is not so much a poet as an admirable rhetorician in verse. Its rhymes were ingenious, inexhaustible, astonishing as tricks of legerdemain, but the tone was uninspired, the matter thin and void. Rostand recalled to you more than ever the type of clever schoolboy or undergraduate who is a "dab" at verses. There was disappointment, too, over the representation. Lucien Guitry was, and is, undoubtedly the finest actor of our time. He was going, it was hoped, to make a legendary thing of Chanticleer, the Gallic cock, something magisterially symbolical of France, and of goodness knows what else. As it turned out, he was manifestly ill at ease in his beak and feathers and suggested to an English eye something out of a Christmas pantomime. He certainly failed to make anything impressive of his part. Jean Coquelin, with echoes of his father's trumpet notes and not a little of his breadth of style, was excellent as the Dog, but had little to do. Simone ("the wondrous demonic little Simone," as Henry James called her on another occasion) minced and coquetted under difficulties in the disguise of the Golden Pheasant. We came away rather bewildered, with wonderful rhymes ringing in our ears but with a general suspicion, which we hardly dared to confess, that we had been "sold," that what the world had waited for so long was really "full of emptiness." Assuredly, the fame of Edmond Rostand will not rest upon "Chantecler."

A Scene from Rostand's "Chantecler."
CHANTECLER (M. GUITRY) WINS THE LOVE OF THE HEN-PHEASANT (MME. SIMONE).

LONDON first nights of French plays have a peculiar character of their own. You will miss the familiar faces of many ordinary London first-nighters, and the audience becomes exceptionally cosmopolitan as well as exceptionally "smart." When Sarah Bernhardt was in her Sardou period—touring the world in "Fédora," in "La Tosca," in "Théodora," in "Gismonda"—not to be there on the first night was to confess yourself an outcast from London "society." Though the actress was then by no means in her first youth, her golden voice was still golden and her charm, her art, at its most potent. Yet none of these brilliant occasions moved me so deeply as one only a few months ago when she returned to London, aged, maimed, but indomitable, to appear at the Prince's in "Daniel." The immense audience, too, one could see was deeply moved. Daniel is not visible till the third act, and so great was the excitement, made more tense by waiting, that applause broke out some seconds before the act-drop was raised. When it was, and the actress was seen, seated alone in the centre of the stage, the mighty roar of welcome that went up! The actress was overcome and shed tears. I must confess I did, too. The thought of so many vanished things, the revival of so many old emotions, the contrast of past and present—these

cannot have left any of the older playgoers unaffected. A cry from some of the younger playgoers, at the curtain-fall, of "Speech! Speech!" relieved the pathos of the occasion with a touch of the grotesque. French actresses are not accustomed to make speeches from the stage, and Sarah Bernhardt does not speak English.

"A MOMENT OF GREAT HAPPINESS."

I have kept to the last a first night very different from those I have been chronicling. Indeed, even now I am doubtful whether I ought to speak of it, for I always think of it less as a public event than as one of my intimate, personal pleasures with which the world at large is not concerned. After all, however, it *was* a public performance, my pleasure was shared with many others, and so in recording mine, all egoistically, hugging as it were my remembered pleasure to myself, I may still have the excuse of reviving theirs. It is a subtle point, but I think indisputable, that a peculiar charm attaches for us to such plays as happen to have been mentioned in the classics of romance. When I saw M. de Max not long ago at the Pavilion in an act of "Andromaque" it was an added pleasure to recall Addison's account of Sir Roger de Coverley's visit to "The Distrest Mother," the English version of this play of Racine's, and to remember, too, the chapter in "Tancred" telling how the great Sidonia once saw "Andromaque" played in a little Flemish town by the strolling Baroni family. When they are playing "Hamlet," one likes to think of the account in "Tom Jones" of Partridge's visit to Garrick's performance of it. I have never seen (who has in this generation?) either "Lover's Vows" or "The Stranger," two old adaptations from Kotzebue, but I should like to see them if only because the amateurs in "Mansfield Park" rehearsed the first and Pen's adored Miss Fotheringay played Mrs. Haller, the heroine of the other. Do people ever now read that wonderful romance of Stendhal's, "La Chartreuse de Parme"? If so, they will remember Fabrice's visit to the local theatre.

> He took a box in the third tier so as not to be seen; they were giving Goldoni's "La Locandiera." He was looking at the architecture of the house and scarcely glanced at the stage. But the crowded audience was bursting into laughter at every instant; Fabrice looked at the young actress who was taking the part of the hostess. She struck him as quite pretty and nature itself — a naive young girl who was the first to laugh at the pretty things that Goldoni put into her mouth and that she had the air of being surprised at uttering.

Well, "La Locandiera" and Eleonora Duse's first appearance in it here gave me the peculiar pleasure I have been hugging to myself. I can still see Duse entering in plain chocolate-coloured gown, stiff hoop, and coquettish little cap. She, like Fabrice's young woman, was "nature itself." But she was exquisitely delicate and dainty by nature. I cannot go farther into it: I will only say that this performance fixes itself indelibly in my memory as, beyond all question, the moment of greatest happiness I have ever enjoyed in the theatre.

Sarah Bernhardt in "La Tosca"—one of her greatest triumphs.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?

by

W·B·MAXWELL

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

THE Essential Knowledge Organization had made the sort of overwhelming success that is only possible in chaotic times. The over-excited public at once took to its little books, with the hopeful device of an anchor on the yellow covers and the stimulating maxims inside. The books taught you the art of *management*—management of everything, from poultry to husbands—and they sold by millions.

Started with some slight assistance from Government, the Organization had given away large sums in support of village clubs and libraries; now it fostered innumerable benevolent enterprises, and was always launching schemes from its big central offices in the narrow street behind the Westminster Cathedral. It had a president, vice-presidents, and a managing committee; but really and truly it was all the secretary, Mr. Edward Batsford. Mr. Batsford had invented it, and his energy and will-power kept it going.

"He seems to think," said Irene Wing, writing home about him, "that because he does not spare himself there's no occasion to spare others. I'll say at once I never took such a dislike to anybody in my life; and as I know instinctively that the feeling is mutual, I don't suppose I shall stay here long."

"Would you believe it?" said her mother, in the home circle at Woking.

There were many girls employed at the Organization, and they all freely declared that they hated Mr. Batsford. As a man, he was, so to speak, death to girls—emitting a cold indifference and disdain that made an atmosphere they could not breathe comfortably. It was the more hateful because at first sight, and sometimes even for a day or two, newly-arrived girls admired his profile, were vaguely troubled by romantic fancies concerning him—as, for instance, that he was unhappy and needed comfort. But, my goodness, they soon found out their mistake.

"There is something here belonging to somebody"; and he pointed to a gauze scarf hanging over the back of a chair. 'Please take it away."

"Sorry. My scarf!"

"Oh, it belongs to you? Please take it away."

His gesture, as he repeated the request, was as irritating as a mustard plaster. Gradually the lightest-hearted girls acquired the certainty that their scarves, smiles, pretty curls, collars, and all things concerning them were odious to him. As soon as you were really certain, his way of looking at you made you feel an absolute worm; unless you returned scorn for scorn, and said behind his back how intensely you loathed him.

He was so *down* on you, too. Some days you simply could not do right. But on no one had he come down with such heaviness as on Miss Wing. As the weeks passed all noticed it.

ONE Saturday afternoon in the early period of her employment her mother and her stepfather came up from Woking to see her about it. They brought with them a faithful admirer of Irene, young Mr. Charles Paisley, who felt very strongly on the subject—so much so, indeed, that he had given up his afternoon's golf.

They took Irene out to tea at a restaurant, and her mother, Mrs. Gordon, at once exclaimed on the deterioration of her appearance. She looked pale and exhausted. She herself confessed that she had nearly broken down on two occasions.

'Well, now," said her stepfather, when they were all established at the tea-table, 'tell us some more about the old gentleman."

'What old gentleman?" asked Irene, surprised.

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"Why, Mr. Batsford, of course."

"But he's not old," and Irene laughed. "What on earth put that into your head? How comic! No, I don't suppose he's more than thirty-five."

"Would you believe it?" said Mrs. Gordon. It was a favourite expression of hers.

"Then what is it," asked Mr. Gordon, "that has soured him and made him so abominable to you all?"

"Oh, I suppose it's the nature of the beast," said Irene.

And for the rest of the meal she talked about his unamiable characteristics. She told them of his arrogance and self-confidence with the authors of the famous little books; of his high-and-mightiness with members of the committee, speaking to titled ladies as curtly, yes, as rudely, as to any of the staff—above all, she told them of his oppressive goading of the girls, whether clerks, packers, or typists.

"He's simply a slave-driver," said Mr. Gordon.

"A bully and a coward," said young Charles Paisley, becoming crimson with indignation.

"But he sha'n't bully our Irene," said her mother, bristling.

"No, by Jove, he sha'n't!" said young Mr. Charles, more warmly still.

Naturally they were all very indignant about it. "I'd like to put a spoke in his wheel," said Mr. Gordon, meditatively. "I'll turn it over in my mind. There's often ways of getting at people and making 'em sorry. I know three members of Parliament, and I think I'll speak to——"

"Oh, don't do that," said Irene. "No," she went on, valiantly, "don't let anybody bother about me. I sha'n't hesitate to resign. I shall say—if he pushes me to it—that it's obvious I don't give satisfaction, and the sooner he finds somebody more suited to his taste the better pleased I shall be."

"Bravo!" said her mother, fondly. "There's my high-spirited girl."

So they left it at that. Irene should give notice the moment she felt the thing was more than she could put up with.

TIME passed; and then she received an order that next day she was to work in the secretary's own room. She and Miss Talbot were down in the basement corridor by the refreshment-room; and Irene, almost fainting, sat for support on a window-ledge!

"Miss Talbot, you don't mean it! You're only pulling my leg?"

"No, my dear," said Miss Talbot; "it's quite correct. You're to be put on to the tabulating. It's difficult work, requiring intelligence—and there's nobody else available."

"Did he himself say he wanted me?"

"No"; and Miss Talbot tittered. "He said he'd rather have any other girl. But I told him it would have to be you."

Irene had sprung up from the window-ledge. "Thank you very much—and him, too. Much obliged, I'm sure."

After a sleepless night she arrived so early that the charwoman was only just leaving the secretary's room.

The room was like himself—dark, severe, and handsome in a sombre, dignified way; without a single grace or ornament. As she glanced at his table, she was conscious of a sort of shuddering pleasure at being here—right in the lion's den. Her courage rose to meet the ordeal that lay before her. "To-day," she thought, "will probably see the end of me; but I don't care. When he begins at me I'll stand up to him. I won't take it lying down like the other girls."

Then she crossed to the wide hearth and examined her reflection in a looking-glass over the marble chimney-piece. Excitement had brought a glow to her cheeks, and her eyes seemed abnormally large and bright. She blinked them, observing the blinks, and remembering what her mother and others had said about the length of her eyelashes. Her dark hair, parted at the side, made a fair-sized wave over her left ear, and an enormous wave over her right ear. With the palm of her open hand she smoothed it. She also re-settled her lace collar and puffed out the sleeves of her blouse.

"I wish," said a voice—and she started violently—"I wish you would kindly finish dressing before you come to work."

He was there. He had gone to his table, and was sitting down. He had caught her unawares, and "begun at her" before she was ready.

"Sorry," she murmured, feeling greatly embarrassed; and she added something about having hurried because she did not want to be unpunctual.

"Punctuality," said Mr. Batsford, "is a great and a very rare virtue. Of course, it doesn't consist in doing things half an hour before the appointed time, but *at* the time."

"I'll be late to-morrow," thought Irene, with swelling indignation, "and see how he likes that." But she said nothing aloud; and two or three minutes had passed before she ventured to steal a glance in his direction.

He was opening letters with an ugly steel knife. She observed the strong, decisive action of the knife, and the rapidity with which he mastered the contents of each letter. Now and then he was longer with a letter, deliberating over it, and smiling. His smile seemed to imply contempt, or at best amused

"'I wish,' said a voice—and she started kindly finish dressing before

toleration, for the folly of all mankind and womankind.

"Well? What is it?" He had spoken without raising his eyes or looking round. "Do you want anything?"

"I? Oh, no."

"Then why are you watching me?" he asked, still without looking up. "I am opening letters. Have you never seen that done before?"

"Often," said Irene, shortly. "I was only wondering what I am to do exactly."

"Miss Talbot will be here soon. She'll show you. Tabulation. Quite easy."

IN due course Miss Talbot arrived and established Irene at a table by herself, with masses of material from which she was to extract information. Two girls seated themselves at another table and laboured at lesser tasks. And the work of the day went on.

Secretarial girls came, and Mr. Batsford dictated to them so fast that they pleaded for mercy. An author of a little book came, and Mr. Batsford made him all hot and angry by the criticisms or amendments that he had scribbled on the proof. Some of the male *employées* on the upper floor raised their voices, and Mr. Batsford went out and raised his voice—so fearfully that Irene's companions quailed over their papers, and were trembling and gasping when he returned.

Then a member of the committee came in. She was a Lady Cynthia Grange, a resplendently dressed widow of thirty, with an affected voice and languishing manner. In spite of her rank, fine clothes, and official position, Mr. Batsford snubbed her cruelly; telling her in effect that he was too busy to be bothered with her, and that she had better call again.

In this room, at the central point of the vast Organization, the atmosphere vibrated with haste and energy. Irene herself had the sensation of abnormal life and alertness. One took more breaths and had a greater number of heart-beats to the minute. It was like being in a battle. Everything

violently—'I wish you would you come to work.'"

seemed not only interesting, but of paramount importance. This was how he ran the Organization; and, greatly as she disliked him, she could not help admiring the relentless efficiency of his generalship.

The long days dragged themselves through, somehow. Downstairs, in the wretchedly uncomfortable refreshment-room or the dirty, ill-ventilated dressing-rooms, the girls chattered about the grim chieftain, asking Irene all sorts of questions.

"Is it as bad as you expected—being in there with him?"

"Far worse," said Irene.

"Does he go for you?"

Irene reported that he had not as yet abused her; but he was always looking at her contemptuously, as though the mere sight of her was obnoxious to him.

"I know," said one of the girls. "I know that look."

And Irene showed them some outline sketches of his profile that she had surreptitiously made from the life. The girls said they were excellent, giving an idea of his angry frown and glum expression.

The girls often spoke disparagingly of the fact that he had not been to the war: but here some sense of justice, despite of her feeling of repulsion, compelled Irene to defend him.

"I can't think that he would show the white feather," she said, puckering her forehead as she thought about it. "It doesn't seem *like* his character. I suppose he thought he was indispensable to the business."

"Yes, that's what everybody thought who was in a cushy job."

"Oh, you can't call it a *cushy* job," said Irene. "Give the devil his due. He *does* work."

She tried to defend him, too, when Miss Talbot and the other girls said that he was

trying to marry Lady Cynthia Grange. At first she could not give credence to this tale.

"That *must* be absurd," she said. "For one thing, he's so fearfully rude to her."

"Oh, Lady Cynthia doesn't mind that," said Miss Talbot, tittering. "Anyhow, she's always coming back for more, isn't she?"

And they went on to say that, of course, they did not suppose that he was in love with her. Love and Mr. Batsford were terms so essentially contradictory that they could never be brought together. But as an ambitious, conscienceless man, he would marry Lady Cynthia for her money and the handle to her name, and afterwards trample on her. He would trample on a thousand Lady Cynthias, if he thought that a pavement of broken hearts would give him a surer foothold on his way to victory.

Irene shivered. This notion of a mercenary marriage was the worst thing she had heard about him; and since it seemed to be true, she felt that she must despise as well as hate him.

THEN one afternoon, when she was busily tabulating, he came and stood behind her and asked her to show him her work.

"This is Silverbridge," she said, handing him the sheets.

Silverbridge was a village in Hampshire that demanded furniture, games, and a grant in aid for its new evening club; and Irene had been "getting out" every possible fact relating to the village.

"Yes," said Mr. Batsford, after studying the sheets. "That's very good indeed. Exactly what I wanted."

These few curt words of praise made Irene thrill with delight. They were so entirely unexpected. She felt intoxicated by the triumphant thought that, far from failing, she was doing well. But immediately afterwards, when he went back to his table and she became calm again, she had a strong feeling of self-contempt for being so abjectly pleased with his praise. She thought, "That is always the way when you are dealing with a tyrant. The least little bit of kindness seems precious; whereas with really considerate people, everything is taken for granted and there is no gratitude." She determined that she would not be guilty of this weakness. Nothing should ever make her bow down or truckle to him. Further she vowed, in order to maintain her self-respect, that if a chance came she would tackle him as unflinchingly as she did in those dreams of hers.

The chance came promptly, to put her resolution to the test.

It was on the following evening, just before they closed the office, and Miss Talbot had brought him the Complaints Book. This volume, kept in the basement, was open for all *employées* to write down their complaints or suggestions. As a rule there was nothing much in the book; but now a lot of girls had banded together to complain of the bad food, the dirty lavatory accommodation, and the want of sufficient heating in the workrooms. Irene was not a signatory to this indictment, but she knew all about it.

"'Rubbish!" said Mr. Batsford, frowning as he read the book. "Do they expect me to send them in motor-cars for luncheon at the Ritz Hotel every day?" And he shut the book with a bang.

"Excuse me," said Irene, "they don't expect anything so foolish or ridiculous; they only ask for decent treatment. And if you ask for my opinion——"

"But I haven't," said Mr. Batsford.

"Well, I think it's iniquitous, the way they're treated."

"Oh, you do, do you?"

"Yes, I do."

The other two girls had already gone; Miss Talbot, appalled by Irene's sudden madness, had slunk out of the room, and they stood confronting each other exactly as in the dreams. Irene's heart was beating fast; she had flushed hotly, and now she was very pale; but having started she gamely went on with it, although her voice shook.

She recited all the just grievances of the girls—frost-bitten at their desks in this cold winter weather; compelled to use one horrid towel on a roller; with nothing but hard household soap and often not enough of that; nowhere to put your little odds and ends; lukewarm tea, dusty rock-cakes, rancid margarine, and so on.

He heard her out, with a frown that did not daunt her, and a smile so irritating that it helped to keep up her courage. Then without a word he put on his hat and overcoat, and left the room. Irene sank down on her chair all weak and breathless, feeling as one does after running to catch a train and jumping into an empty compartment.

"Look here, Miss Wing."

He had come back, and she pulled herself together.

"There may be something in what you say about their being none too comfortable; but, you know, this is a serious enterprise, and——" He made a gesture, which seemed to say, "After all, they're only girls; and you know my opinion of the species."

"But, Miss Wing, about yourself? You honestly don't find the conditions satisfactory?"

"Who could?" said Irene, with a flash.

"You don't feel happy in the work?"

"*Happy!*" echoed Irene, with all the irony she could put into her tone.

"I see. Very well. Good-night."

Downstairs in the basement Miss Talbot was waiting for her.

"Well," said Miss Talbot, "you have done it now with a vengeance. He gave you the sack, I suppose?"

"Not in so many words, but as good as. I'm glad of it." And Irene tossed her head and glared defiantly. "I'm fed up with the Organization, and I meant to bring it to a crisis." Then Irene collapsed a little. "Only please don't tell the other girls. One feels so small being turned out. As a favour to me, don't let them know."

"But they'll see you go," said Miss Talbot. "To-morrow he'll probably tell you to draw your screw to the end of the week and not come again. That's the way he does it."

BUT on the morrow nothing happened; nor on the day after; and in these two days Irene lived more vividly and expended more nervous force than during the last two years. It was like being driven along the edge of a terrific precipice, or being tied to the mouth of a loaded cannon. On the third day she was given fresh work to do—making synopses; compared with which tabulating had been mere child's play. She looked at the ceiling despairingly, puckered her forehead, and bit her lip; then she clenched her teeth and wrestled with the difficult task; and after a day or two she felt, she knew, that she was getting on all right. Moreover, marvellous as it seemed, he evidently did not intend to punish her for her violent outspokenness. He appeared to have forgotten all about it. Perhaps, too, with all its faults, his character had this one magnanimous streak in it—knowing how rude he was himself, he refused to harbour resentment on account of the rudeness of other people.

"Wait, please. I want to speak to you."

This was on the evening of the tenth day, and they were alone in the room again. He went on writing for a moment or two; then looked up, and told her that he had secured her another and more suitable job. A rich lady of his acquaintance wanted a secretary or companion, and she was willing to engage Irene. She would probably take her to the South of France, and give her quite a good time.

"Lady Cynthia, I suppose?" said Irene, flushing.

"No, it's not Lady Cynthia. It's an elderly lady—Mrs. Gore-Johnson."

Irene declined the engagement.

"Oh, nonsense!" said Mr. Batsford, severely, after he had asked her a few questions. "Of course you must go. From what you tell me of your circumstances, it's the very thing for you."

Then he walked about the room looking at her gloomily, while Irene pleaded not to be sent away. A dozen different feelings impelled her. The sense of failure just when she had been confident of success; the sense of injustice; a sudden invincible distaste to things that a little while ago would have filled her with pleasurable anticipation, such as ease, luxury, foreign travel; above all, wounded pride—these sensations and thoughts made it a hard fight for her to maintain her dignity and not burst into tears.

"Please don't send me away, Mr. Batsford. It isn't fair. Even if you want to get rid of me, it's not kind—no, nor just either—to do it without cause. I have done nothing wrong. What will the other girls think?"

Mr. Batsford shrugged his shoulders and smiled.

"I—I have tried so hard. You can't say I don't try."

"I haven't said it."

"Then why?" said Irene, with a catch of the breath.

"Why? Well——" He was rearranging the books on his table, and he stood with his back turned towards her. "Well, if you must know—frankly, I consider that you are a disturbing, an upsetting influence here."

"But that's not true," she said, indignantly. "No one has a right to say that. Why, I didn't even sign the big complaint in the book."

Mr. Batsford merely shrugged his shoulders, and Irene continued to address his back.

"I talk less than any of them. I work too hard to——"

"Yes," said Mr. Batsford, turning round, "you work too hard. That's another reason. I have noticed how pale you have been lately"; and he went on to say that work in the office was not likely to grow any lighter, but rather heavier.

"You know, Miss Wing," he said, walking about the room again, "I have given myself body and soul to the Organization. Nothing but the work matters to me. The work is my life—although I understand that I can't expect other people to be interested in it."

"But I *am* interested in it," cried Irene. "I think of nothing else. I should be miserable if I wasn't going on with it."

And it was true. Such, it appeared, was the inexorable force of habit. She looked round her, at the dingy room, at her little table—her own private table—and she felt that even the presence of Mr. Batsford in the room did not spoil it for her. To be

banished from the room and her work would be simply unbearable. She said so.

"Oh, all right," said Mr. Batsford, brusquely. "Have it your own way"; and he snatched up his coat and hat, and went out.

AFTER this Irene felt something approaching to security of tenure with regard to her cane chair and the special table, and she worked with a will. Thinking incessantly of Mr. Batsford's character, she readjusted some of her views concerning it. The devil is never quite as black as the gossip of his dependents paints him. She said to herself, "I must not allow my judgment to be biased by the fact that he is so entirely unsympathetic in my eyes. This instinctive antagonism that exists between him and me must be put clean out of consideration when I am summing him up; and if I can find any redeeming traits I must conscientiously recognize them."

The cook had been dismissed, and there was a marked improvement in the catering. New japanned basins had been fitted in the dressing-rooms; the quality of the soap was better; and one morning carpenters appeared and began to fix a range of neat lockers and shelves.

Irene, watching all these improvements, felt delighted, and yet perturbed and fluttered. The fact was that a vainglorious thought kept agitating her mind. Had Mr. Batsford been influenced, to a large or small extent, by what she had so boldly said? Perhaps her outburst, coming on top of the complaint book, had "brought home to him" the real discomfort of her fellow-workers.

She waited for an opportunity, and then told him what pleasure his obliging acts had given to everyone; but he snubbed her unmercifully.

Then all at once the work increased to a terrible extent, and the whole Organization heard the first murmurs of a gathering storm. A member of Parliament had asked a question in the House. He wanted to know how the large funds contributed by the public were being administered, and whether it was a fact that the absolute control of the Organization was in the hands of one man, the secretary. This question, leading to comments in the Press, roused to bustling activity the vice-presidents, the committee, the principal subscribers, who now all required the fullest information in regard to the smallest details. For the staff, it soon meant that their work had almost doubled. Mr. Batsford was hard at it to all hours of the night, and his temper became appalling. Irene, often working after office hours herself, did not dare speak to him or even whisper good-night when she crept away and left him sitting there.

Then Mr. Batsford fell ill. Instead of arriving as usual one morning, he sent a message to say he was laid up. His absence created the utmost confusion.

"We shall never get through the day without him," said Miss Talbot, desolately.

And they did not. The president came, demanding such statistics as made you giddy; saying that he wanted a special general meeting to be called, notices sent out, and a statement prepared for the Press. About tea-time Miss Talbot, in despair, sent Irene to Mr. Batsford's private residence with a letter imploring him to scrawl his pencilled instructions.

THE house was in one of those old streets near the river, and as soon as Irene entered it a rapid readjustment of her ideas began. It was modestly but charmingly furnished, with lots of pretty things. She was very kindly received by his two maiden sisters, women much older than himself, who insisted on giving her tea while the letter went upstairs to the sick room.

"I hope he's not very bad," said Irene.

"Well, you know, it's this horrible trench fever. He *would* go back too soon after his dreadful wound, and he got the fever—and it returns."

"Do you mean that he was at the war?" said Irene, blankly.

"Of course he was at the war," said the elder sister, bridling. "He enlisted the first day of the war—got his commission at the front."

"Twice wounded, and twice mentioned in despatches," said the younger sister.

Irene's thoughts were in a whirl; the readjustments required were too rapid. She could scarcely listen to what the two sisters were now saying. Obviously they adored him and thought him the best of brothers. They said his talents were so great that he would make a success of anything he touched, and that splendid commercial posts had been offered to him. But he did not care for money; he only cared for work. They said, too, that no doubt he had secret enemies, who had stirred up all this fuss and worry about the Organization.

Irene was thinking of his military service. Instead of dinning the war, as Charles Paisley always did, he never said one word about it. She thought, "Of course! Why should he? What does he care what I and the other girls say about him? Not a snap of his fingers! But, by Jingo, it was fine of him to enlist in the ranks—and first day of the war. No shilly-shally about *that*."

"In spite of his illness, he had got up and dressed himself; and he said he was going straight back to the office."

While she was talking to herself in this manner, he unexpectedly opened the door and came into the room. In spite of his illness, he had got up and dressed himself; and he said he was going straight back to the office.

His sisters were aghast. "Edward! You can't do it. You're in a high fever. At least wait till a cab can be fetched."

"There is one at the door now," said Mr. Batsford. "Are you ready, Miss Wing?"

The sisters followed them out, whispering anxiously to Irene.

Sitting by his side in the cab, she spoke to him with fear and trembling.

"Mr. Batsford, *is* this wise?"

"I wish you'd kindly——" And he paused.

"Mind my own business?"

"Well, yes—since you've said it."

He was dreadful to see, at his big office table; but he sat there working continuously till midnight. Now and again he talked to himself, but not deliriously.

"What fools people are!" he kept saying. "What infernal fools people are!"

He came next morning, and he looked worse than ever. His eyes were like tarnished glass, instead of being darkly brilliant or blazing with fire; he had a little dry cough; his usually brusque gestures had become slow and vague. Nevertheless, he worked all through the day, and under his control the Organization again was running smoothly.

In the afternoon, Irene, feeling that common humanity called upon her to do something, brought him up a breakfast cup of tea and one of the new, gentler kind of rock-cakes. He thanked her; but made a poor pretence of eating.

At half-past seven she asked him how long he proposed to go on working. He did not answer, and she repeated her question.

"Till I have finished," he said, wearily. "Don't wait. I sha'n't want you any more."

Irene sat watching him, and feeling various emotions. She was worried, afraid, and angry. She thought, "Why should I fear him? He is only a sick man—and a very childish one, too. This masculine obstinacy of his may kill him. Where's the sense in sitting up when he ought to be in bed? Talk of girls being silly!"

Suddenly she pulled herself together, rose so abruptly that she nearly upset the cane chair, and marched across to his table.

"Mr. Batsford, I want to feel your hand."

"Feel my hand?"

"Yes," she said, resolutely, and she seized his hand and held it between the palms of her hands. "Yes," she said again, almost fiercely now, "just as I thought," and she flounced out of the room.

She was breathless when she returned presently.

"Mr. Batsford, I have sent for a taxi-cab. Your temperature is probably a hundred and four. And you've got to go straight home."

"But my work?" he said, feebly.

"Your work can't be any good while you're in this state. Besides, I promised Miss Batsford."

"You did, did you?" He looked at her helplessly. "You may be right. Very well. I'll obey."

Wonderful feelings arose in Irene's breast as she went down the stone stairs with him. She felt pity, a queer sort of motherly pride, and above all an overwhelmingly delicious enhancement of power and importance. She had done this incredible thing. She had sent him home.

HE was terrible when he returned to the office after three days in bed—so hard and stern that one could not even ask him if he felt better. But Irene did not mind. Obviously he was getting on all right. If she had not saved his life, she had at any rate performed a plain duty, in accordance with the dictates of humanity.

And she had little leisure for meditation: the work was so colossal. The storm had gathered force. More questions had been asked in Parliament, and the newspapers were full of criticism about the management of the Organization. No one could doubt the good it was doing, no one could question its honesty; the carefully audited accounts were as clear as daylight. Only you could not deny that it was a one-man concern. Mr. Batsford had run it with Napoleonic methods, deciding weighty matters all by himself, issuing grants without always waiting for the authorization of his figure-head committee.

Now, however, all these dummies had come to life. Irene, who attended the special general meeting and made notes, seemed able to understand the whole position. Acting in his masterful way, Mr. Batsford had wounded susceptibilities, trodden on toes, rubbed people the wrong way. Now, in the common phrase, they would not be unwilling to bring him down a peg or two. One could feel the latent hostility in the air.

More and more Irene felt indignant as she listened. All these people were utterly incompetent themselves; there would have been no Organization at all but for him. He had made a triumphant success of it. Why shouldn't he manage it without their vacillating interference?

She noticed that he was haughty and resolute, but very courteous, restraining himself admirably. He agreed at once to any suggestions for curbing his power in the future.

Irene after the meeting walked about his empty room, and almost burst with indignation at the way they were treating him. She threw herself heart and soul into his case. She felt, "This is no time for private feelings. My likes and dislikes are nothing. Whether I hate him or not, he is in trouble; and it is my duty to help him."

During the days that followed she helped him to the best of her ability, never sparing herself. Thus, tidying his table of an evening after he had gone, she would finish uncompleted tasks and repair any little omissions caused by the stress and turmoil of the day. One evening she found in a tray two large cheques duly signed, with letters attached saying that the Organization had pleasure in making these two grants to the institutions named. The addressed envelopes were there too; the dates on the letters were a week old. Obviously, instead of being sent off, these things had been overlooked. Irene stamped the envelopes with her own stamps, and posted them with her own hands.

On the following evening she received a visit from her old and faithful admirer, Mr. Paisley. "Oh, bother!" said Irene, when she heard that he was waiting for her in the basement. She guessed at once that he had come to ask for news about her; because during this period of excitement and anxiety she had not been able to answer letters from home. Her mother, moreover, had irritated her by persistent inquiries as to whether anything was happening at the Organization. "Don't forget to tell us if anything fresh occurs"—and so forth. Couldn't they read in the papers that the secretary had been attacked by secret enemies and that a widespread conspiracy to overthrow him was in full activity?

"You really oughtn't to come here," she said to Mr. Paisley, with visible displeasure. "You might surely have known how busy I am."

"Oh, you can spare me just a minute or two," said Charles, grinning.

"I *can't!*" and Irene stamped her foot irritably. "Not half a minute. I'm at my wits' ends to get through with all I've got to do."

"But I say," and Mr. Paisley sniggered, and jerked his head in an upward direction. "How does that brute like it now?"

"What do you mean?" and Irene's eyes flashed.

"Mr. What's-his-name—your boss! He is being paid out for the way he behaved to you, isn't he? Your stepfather promised to get quits with him."

"What do you mean?" repeated Irene, but in a dull, frozen tone, and she pressed both hands to her heart.

She had guessed the abominable truth, although she asked what Charles meant. She remembered what her idiotic stepfather had said in those early days about making Mr. Batsford sorry for himself and speaking to members of Parliament. And he had done it all. Her own close relatives were the secret enemies who were trying to ruin Mr. Batsford. Her own thoughtless words had been the spark that set the slow powder-train alight and finally produced this world-shaking explosion.

"Tell dad," she said, "that I'll never forgive him for his interference—not as long as I live. No, nor you either," and she rushed away from the amazed Charles Paisley.

She rushed upstairs, two steps at a time, and burst into the secretary's room. She wanted to fall on her knees there and then, and confess her tragic share in all the disaster. But Mr. Batsford was not in his room. To-night he had left the building earlier than usual. She wanted to follow him to his private residence, but dared not do so. She dared not face the two maiden sisters—it was they who had first used that expression "secret enemies."

In an agony of mind she paced the floor of the empty room. When she thought of her stepfather, she was tempted to echo Mr. Batsford's feverish phrase, "What infernal fools people are"; when she thought of herself, she either gnashed her teeth or gnawed her handkerchief. It did seem to her that she had been guilty of such an unspeakably odious treachery. To sit there day after day, within sight of his eyes, within sound of his voice, within reach of an accidental touch of his hand; and all the while the conspiracy against him being hatched under her mother's roof at Woking.

THAT night she did not sleep a minute. She tossed and turned and moaned, stung by remorse and shame.

Pallid of face, with red rims round her eyes, she was waiting for him in his room when he arrived next morning, and she began at once, the moment he opened the door.

"Mr. Batsford, I have to tell you that I am to blame for everything. I am more sorry than I can say, but all of it is my doing."

"I don't quite follow," said Mr. Batsford, looking at her.

Then she explained, telling him the complete story. When she had finished, he laughed and made light of it.

"'What's the meaning of this?' he roared. 'Receipt and thanks for two hundred pounds.'"

" Oh, that's all right," and he shrugged his shoulders. " Public men are liable to this sort of criticism. I was always prepared for it. If Mr. Gordon hadn't started it, somebody else would."

" It's very good—and noble of you—to say so."

" Not in the least. Please don't distress yourself—don't give it another thought."

" All my life," murmured Irene, brokenly.

" Nonsense! Now, if you don't mind, you really must allow me to get on with the letters."

She watched him as he opened the letters with the steel knife, just as she had done on her very first morning in the room; and every now and then she furtively wiped her eyes. She felt that he had taken her confession grandly. He was stern and dignified as ever, absolutely unruffled.

But all at once he sprang up with a loud cry, exactly as if he had been stabbed in the back by an invisible foe.

" What's the meaning of this? " he roared. " Receipt and thanks for two hundred pounds! But the cheque was never sent. I had it there safe in my tray." And he rang the bell, shouted for Miss Talbot, and wildly turned out the contents of all the trays on his table.

Miss Talbot with others came in, and there was such a noise that for a little while Irene could not make herself heard. Then she explained that, if he was alluding to cheques for two village clubs, she had packed them up and sent them off herself.

" Oh, you did, did you? " said Mr. Batsford; and he sat down again.

" I—I hope I haven't done wrong," said Irene, faintly.

Mr. Batsford laughed mirthlessly. " Oh, no, you meant well. Only now the fat *is* in the fire."

During the course of the day Irene became as one distraught. Little by little she learned all about those cheques. They were being purposely kept back. They had been talked of by the committee, who refused to authorize their issue until time was given them further to consider the matter. Mr. Batsford had pleaded ardently on behalf of the two clubs, but he had promised to abide the committee's decision. Now, of course, they would think he was wilfully defying them.

Nevertheless, as Miss Talbot informed Irene, he had given an order that no explanation was to be offered as to how the mistake occurred. He assumed full responsibility for it.

That, however, Irene could not bear. She wrote frenzied letters to the president and to several members of the committee, stating that the blame was entirely hers and imploring that no one else should be made to suffer. She even wrote, in the same strain, to Lady Cynthia Grange.

THE affair culminated two days later. There was a sitting of the committee with closed doors, and after a time the secretary and Miss Wing were called in to hear their fate. The committee, speaking through the mouth of their chairman, said that a thing like this could not be altogether passed over. In view of his eminent services in the past and his promises to amend his manner in the future, Mr. Batsford was to retain his position; but Miss Wing must go.

" Oh, no, she doesn't," said Mr. Batsford.

" What is that? "

" If *she* goes, *I* go."

" It is absurd," said Lady Cynthia, " to try to shield the girl from the consequences of her own stupidity."

Then Mr. Batsford said that the girl was not stupid; at any rate not as stupid as many other people, including Lady Cynthia herself.

Then Lady Cynthia said she would not be insulted and shouted at.

" I am sorry I shouted," said Mr. Batsford, a little less loudly; but, soon losing mastery of his passion, he was rude to the committee. There is no denying that Mr. Batsford could be rude, and on this occasion he *was* rude. He, as it were, threw his resignation in people's faces. He said that the committee might henceforth run the Organization their own way; they might run it to the devil for all he cared. Irene, listening and watching, felt a quivering ecstasy of admiration.

" Come along," he said to her, roughly, at the end of his speech; and he led her through the passages into his own room. After he had banged the door behind them, he stood looking at her with a queer expression on his recently wrathful face.

" Irene," he said, " what's the use? I give it up. I can't struggle against you any more." He had got her in his arms now, and he kissed her almost savagely. " Ah—and you feel the same. You do love me—say it —you've loved me all the time."

And she said it.

" Darling girl, how I fought against pit! But you didn't mind. You soon knew. And you wove your spells, and laid your plots, and delighted in my feeble efforts to escape you."

" No, I *didn't*. How can you say so? "

That same evening she wrote home, at last answering her mother's question as to what had happened at the Organization, and begging that the news might be broken as gently as possible to Charles Paisley.

" Would you believe it? " said Mrs. Gordon, after reading Irene's letter.

THE FOUR JUST MEN

V.

The Man Who Hated Amelia Jones

By EDGAR WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY E. VERPILLEUX

THERE was a letter that came to Leon Gonsalez, and the stamp bore the image and superscription of Alfonso XIII. It was from a placid man who had written his letter in the hour of siesta, when Cordova slept, and he had scribbled all the things which had come into his head as he sat in an orange bower overlooking the lordly Guadalquivir, now in yellow spate.

"It is from Poiccart," said Leon.

"Yes?" replied George Manfred, half asleep in a big arm-chair before the fire.

That and a green-shaded reading lamp supplied the illumination to their comfortable Jermyn Street flat at the moment.

"And what," said George, stretching himself, "what does our excellent friend Poiccart have to say?"

"A blight has come upon his onions," said Leon, solemnly, and Manfred chuckled and then was suddenly grave.

There was a time when the name of these three, with one who now lay in the Bordeaux cemetery, had stricken terror to the hearts of evildoers. In those days The Four Just Men were a menace to the sleep of many cunning men who had evaded the law, yet had not evaded this ubiquitous organization, which slew ruthlessly in the name of Justice.

Poiccart was growing onions! Manfred sighed and repeated the words aloud.

"And why not?" demanded Leon. "Have you read of 'The Three Musketeers'?"

"Surely," said Manfred, with a smile at the fire.

"In what book, may I ask?" demanded Leon.

"Why, in 'The Three Musketeers,' of course," replied Manfred, in surprise.

"Then you did wrong," said Leon Gonsalez, promptly. "To love the Three Musketeers, you must read of them in 'The Iron Mask.' When one of them has grown fat and is devoting himself to his raiment and one is a mere courtier of the King of France and the other is old and full of sorrow for his love-sick child. Then they become human, my dear Manfred, just as Poiccart becomes human when he grows onions. Shall I read you bits?"

"Please," said Manfred, properly abashed.

"H'm," went on Gonsalez. "I told you about the onions, George. 'I have some gorgeous roses. Manfred would love them . . . do not take too much heed of this new blood test, by which the American doctor professes that he can detect degrees of relationship . . . the new little pigs are doing exceedingly well. There is one that is exceptionally intelligent and contemplative. I have named him George.'"

George Manfred by the fire squirmed in his chair and chuckled.

" ' This will be a very good year for wine, I am told,' " Leon read on, " ' but the oranges are not as plentiful as they were last year . . . do you know that the finger-prints of twins are identical? Curiously enough, the finger-prints of twins of the anthropoid ape are dissimilar. I wish you would get information on this subject—— ' "

He read on, little scraps of domestic news, fleeting excursions into scientific side-issues, tiny scraps of gossip—they filled ten closely-written pages.

Leon folded the letter and put it in his pocket.

" Of course he's not right about the finger-prints of twins being identical. That was one of the illusions of the excellent Lombroso. Anyway, the finger-print system is unsatisfactory."

" I never heard it called into question," said George, in surprise. " Why isn't it satisfactory ? "

LEON rolled a cigarette with deft fingers, licked down the paper, and lit the ragged end before he replied.

" At Scotland Yard they have, let us say, one hundred thousand finger-prints. In Britain there are fifty million inhabitants. One hundred thousand is exactly one five-hundredth of fifty millions. Suppose you were a police officer and you were called to the Albert Hall where five hundred people were assembled and told that one of these had in his possession stolen property and you received permission to search them. Would you be content with searching one and giving a clean bill to the rest ? "

" Of course not," said Manfred, " but I see what you mean."

" I mean that until the whole of the country and every country in Europe adopts a system by which every citizen registers his finger-prints, and until all the countries have an opportunity of exchanging those finger-prints and comparing them with their own, it is ridiculous to say that no two prints are alike."

" That settles the finger-print system," said Manfred, *sotto voce*.

" Logically it does," said the complacent Leon, " but actually it will not, of course."

There was a long silence after this and then Manfred reached to a case by the side of the fireplace and took down a book.

Presently he heard the creak of a chair as Gonsalez rose and the soft " pad ! " of a closing door. Manfred looked up at the clock and, as he knew, it was half-past eight.

In five minutes Leon was back again. He had changed his clothing and, as Manfred had once said before, his disguise was perfect. It was not a disguise in the accepted understanding of the word, for he had not in any way touched his face, or changed the colour of his hair. Only by his artistry he contrived to appear just as he wished to appear, an extremely poor man. His collar was clean, but frayed. His boots were beautifully polished, but they were old and patched. He did not permit the crudity of a heel worn down, but had fixed two circular rubber heels just a little too large for their foundations.

" You are an old clerk battling with poverty, and striving to the end to be genteel," said Manfred.

Gonsalez shook his head.

" I am a solicitor who, twenty years ago, was struck off the rolls and ruined because I helped a man to escape the processes of the law. An ever so much more sympathetic *rôle*, George. Moreover, it brings people to me for advice. One of these nights you must come down to the public bar of the Cow and Compasses and hear me discourse upon the Married Woman's Property Act."

" I never asked you what you were before," said George. " Good hunting, Leon, and my respectful salutations to Amelia Jones ! "

Gonsalez was biting his lips thoughtfully and looking into the fire, and now he nodded.

" Poor Amelia Jones ! " he said, softly.

" You're a wonderful fellow," smiled Manfred; " only you could invest a charwoman of middle age with the glamour of romance."

Leon was helping himself into a threadbare overcoat.

" There was an English poet once—it was Pope, I think—who said that everybody was romantic who admired a fine thing, or did one. I rather think Amelia Jones has done both."

THE Cow and Compasses is a small public-house in Treet Road, Deptford. The gloomy thoroughfare was wellnigh empty, for it was a grey cold night when Leon turned into the bar. The uninviting weather may have been responsible for the paucity of clients that evening, for there were scarcely half-a-dozen people on the sanded floor when he made his way to the bar and ordered a claret and soda.

One who had been watching for him started up from the deal form on which she had been sitting and subsided again when he walked toward her with glass in hand.

" Well, Mrs. Jones," he greeted her, " and how are you this evening ? "

She was a stout woman with a white, worn face and hands that trembled spasmodically.

" I am glad you've come, sir," she said.

She held a little glass of port in her hand, but it was barely touched.

It was on one desperate night when in an

agony of terror and fear this woman had fled from her lonely home to the light and comfort of the public-house that Leon had met her. He was at the time pursuing with the greatest caution a fascinating skull which he had seen on the broad shoulders of a Covent Garden porter. He had tracked the owner to his home and to his place of recreation and was beginning to work up to his objective, which was to secure the history and the measurements of this unimaginative bearer of fruit, when the stout charwoman had drifted into his orbit. To-night she evidently had something on her mind of unusual importance, for she made three lame beginnings before she plunged into the matter which was agitating her.

"Mr. Lucas" (this was the name Gonsalez had given to the *habitués* of the Cow and Compasses), "I want to ask you a great favour. You've been very kind to me, giving me advice about my husband, and all that. But this is a big favour, and you're a very busy gentleman, too."

She looked at him appealingly, almost pleadingly.

"I have plenty of time just now," said Gonsalez.

"Would you come with me into the country to-morrow?" she asked. "I want you to—to—to see somebody."

"Why, surely, Mrs. Jones," said Gonsalez.

"Would you be at Paddington Station at nine o'clock in the morning? I would pay your fare," she went on, fervently. "Of course I shouldn't allow you to go to any expense—I've got a bit of money put by."

"As to that," said Leon, "I've made a little money myself to-day, so don't trouble about the fare. Have you heard from your husband?"

"Not from him," she shook her head, "but from another man who has just come out of prison."

Her lips trembled and tears were in her eyes.

"He'll do it, I know he'll do it," she said, with a catch in her voice, "but it's not me that I'm thinking of."

Leon opened his eyes.

"Not you?" he repeated.

He had suspected the third factor, yet had never been able to fit it in the scheme of this commonplace woman.

"No, sir, not me," she said, miserably. "You know he hates me and you know he's going to do me in the moment he gets out, but I haven't told you why."

"Where is he now?" asked Leon.

"Devizes Jail; he's gone there for his discharge. He'll be out in two months."

"And then he'll come straight to you, you think?"

She shook her head.

"Not he," she said, bitterly. "That ain't his way. You don't know him, Mr. Lucas. But nobody does know him like I do. If he'd come straight to me, it'd be all right, but he's not that kind. He's going to kill me, I tell you, and I don't care how soon it comes. He wasn't called Bash Jones for nothing. I'll get it all right!" she nodded, grimly. "He'll just walk into the room and bash me without a word, and that'll be the end of Amelia Jones. But I don't mind, I don't mind," she repeated. "It's the other that's breaking my heart and has been all the time."

He knew it was useless to try to persuade her to tell her troubles, and at closing time they left the bar together.

"I'd ask you home only that might make it worse, and I don't want to get you into any kind of bother, Mr. Lucas," she said.

He offered his hand. It was the first time he had done so, and she took it in her big limp palm and shook it feebly.

"Very few people have shaken hands with Amelia Jones," thought Gonsalez, and he went back to the flat in Jermyn Street to find Manfred asleep before the fire.

HE was waiting at Paddington Station the next morning in a suit a little less shabby and, to his surprise, Mrs. Jones appeared dressed in better taste than he could have imagined was possible. Her clothes were plain, but they effectively disguised the class to which she belonged. She took the tickets for Swindon and there was little conversation on the journey. Obviously she did not intend to unburden her mind as yet.

The train was held up at Newbury whilst a slow up-train shunted to allow a school special to pass. It was crowded with boys and girls who waved a cheery and promiscuous greeting as they passed.

"Of course!" nodded Leon; "it is the beginning of the Easter holidays. I had forgotten."

At Swindon they alighted, and then for the first time the woman gave some indication as to the object of their journey.

"We've got to stay on this platform," she said, nervously. "I'm expecting to see somebody, and I'd like you to see her, too, Mr. Lucas."

Presently another special ran into the station, and the majority of the passengers in this train also were children. Several alighted at the junction, apparently to change for some other destination than London, and Leon was talking to the woman, who he knew was not listening, when he saw her face light up. She left him with a little gasp and walked quickly along the platform to greet a tall, pretty girl, wearing the crimson and

white hat-ribbon of a famous West of England school.

"Why, Mrs. Jones, it is so kind of you to come down to see me. I wish you wouldn't take so much trouble. I should be only too happy to come to London," she laughed. "Is this a friend of yours?"

She shook hands with Leon, her eyes smiling her friendliness.

"It's all right, Miss Grace," said Mrs. Jones, agitated. "I just thought I'd pop down and have a look at you. How are you getting on at school, miss?"

"Oh, splendidly!" said the girl. 'I've won a scholarship."

"Isn't that lovely!" said Mrs. Jones in an awe-stricken voice. "You always was wonderful, my dear."

The girl turned to Leon.

"Mrs. Jones was my nurse, you know, years and years ago, weren't you, Mrs. Jones?"

Amelia Jones nodded.

"How is your husband? Is he still unpleasant?"

"Oh, he ain't so bad, miss," said Mrs. Jones, bravely. "He's a little trying at times."

"Do you know, I should like to meet him."

"Oh, no, you wouldn't, miss," gasped Amelia. "That's only your kind heart. Where are you spending your holidays, miss?" she asked.

"'I'll never see her again!' she muttered, brokenly. 'I'll never see her again!'"

" With some friends of mine at Clifton—Molly Walker, Sir George Walker's daughter."

The eyes of Amelia Jones devoured the girl, and Leon knew that all the love in her barren life was lavished upon this child she had nursed. They walked up and down the platform together, and when her train came in, Mrs. Jones stood at the carriage door until it drew out from the station, and then waited motionless, looking after the express until it melted in the distance.

" I'll never see her again ! " she muttered, brokenly. " I'll never see her again ! Oh, my God ! "

Her face was drawn and ghastly in its pallor, and Leon took her arm.

" You must come and have some refreshment, Mrs. Jones. You are very fond of that young lady ? "

" Fond of her ? " She turned upon him. " Fond of her ? She—she is my daughter ! "

They had a carriage to themselves going back to town and Mrs. Jones told her story.

" GRACE was three years old when her father got into trouble," she said. " He had always been a brute and I think he'd been under the eyes of the police since he was a bit of a kid. I didn't know this when I married him. I was nursemaid in a house that he'd burgled, and I was discharged because I'd left the kitchen door ajar for him, not knowing that he was a thief. He did one long lagging, and when he came out he swore he wouldn't go back to prison again, and the next time, if there was any danger of an alarm being raised, he would make it a case of murder. He and another man got into touch with a rich bookmaker on Blackheath. Bash used to do his dirty work for him, but they quarrelled, and Bash and his pal burgled the house and got away with nearly nine thousand pounds.

" It was a big race day and Bash knew there'd be a lot of money in notes that had been taken on the race-course and that couldn't be traced. I thought he'd killed this man at first. It wasn't his fault that he hadn't. He walked into the room and bashed him as he lay in bed—that was Bash's way—that's how he got his name. He thought there'd be a lot of inquiries and gave me the money to look after. I had to put the notes into an old beer-jar half-full of sand, ram in the cork, and cover the cork and the neck with candle-fat so that the water couldn't get through, and then put it in the cistern, which he could reach from one of the upstairs rooms at the back of the house. I was nearly mad with fear because I thought the gentleman had been killed, but I did as I was told and sank the jar in the cistern. That night Bash and his mate were getting away to the north of England when they were arrested at Euston Station. Bash's friend was killed, for he ran across the line in front of an engine, but they caught Bash and the house was searched from end to end. He got fifteen years' penal servitude, and he would have been out two years ago if he hadn't been a bad character in prison.

" When he was in jail I had to sit down and think, Mr. Lucas, and my first thought was of my child. I saw the kind of life that she was going to grow up to, the surroundings, the horrible slums, the fear of the police, for I knew that Bash would spend a million, if he had it, in a few weeks. I knew I was free of Bash for at least twelve years, and I thought and I thought and at last I made up my mind.

" It was twelve months after he was in jail that I dared get the money, for the police were still keeping their eye on me as the money had not been found. I won't tell you how I bought grand clothes so that nobody would suspect I was a working woman or how I changed the money.

" I put it all into shares. I'm not well educated, but I read the newspapers for months, the columns about money. At first I was puzzled and I could make no end to it, but after a while I got to understand, and it was in an Argentine company that I invested the money, and I got a lawyer in Bermondsey to make a trust of it. She gets the interest every quarter and pays her own bills—I've never touched a penny of it. The next thing was to get my little girl out of the neighbourhood, and I sent her away to a home for small children—it broke my heart to part with her—until she was old enough to go into a school. I used to see her regularly, and when, after my first visit, I found she had almost forgotten who I was, I pretended that I'd been her nurse—and that's the story."

Gonsalez was silent.

" Does your husband know ? "

" He knows I spent the money," said the woman, staring blankly out of the window. " He knows that the girl is at a good school. He'll find out ! "—she spoke almost in a whisper. " He'll find out ! "

So that was the tragedy ! Leon was struck dumb by the beauty of this woman's sacrifice. When he found his voice again, he asked :—

" Why do you think he will kill you ? These kind of people threaten."

" Bash doesn't threaten as a rule," she interrupted him. " It's the questions he's been asking people who know me. People from Deptford who he's met in prison. Asking what I do at nights, what time I go to bed, what I do in the daytime. That's Bash's way."

" I see," said Leon. " Has anybody given him the necessary particulars ? " he asked.

She shook her head.

"They've done their best for me," she said. "They are bad characters and they commit crimes, but there's some good hearts amongst them. They have told him nothing."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm certain. If they had he wouldn't be still asking. Why, Toby Brown came up from Devizes a month ago and told me Bash was there and was still asking questions about me. He'd told Toby that he'd never do another lagging, and that he reckoned he'd be alive up to Midsummer Day if they caught him."

Leon went up to his flat that night exalted.

"What have you been doing with yourself?" asked Manfred. "I, for my part, have been lunching with the excellent Mr. Fare."

"And I have been moving in a golden haze of glory! Not my own, no, not my own, Manfred," he shook his head, "but the glory of Amelia Jones. A wonderful woman, George. For her sake I am going to take a month's holiday, during which time you can go back to Spain and see our beloved Poiccart and hear all about the onions."

"I would like to go back to Madrid for a few days," said Manfred, thoughtfully. "I find London particularly attractive, but if you really are going to take a holiday—where are you spending it, by the way?"

"In Devizes Jail," replied Gonsalez, cheerfully, and Manfred had such faith in his friend that he offered no comment.

LEON GONSALEZ left for Devizes the next afternoon. He arrived in the town at dusk and staggered unsteadily up the rise toward the market-place. At ten o'clock that night a police-constable found him leaning against a wall at the back of the Bear Hotel, singing foolish songs, and ordered him to move away. Whereupon Leon addressed him in language for which he was at the time (since he was perfectly sober) heartily ashamed. Therefor did he appear before a bench of magistrates the next morning, charged with being drunk, using abusive language, and obstructing the police in the execution of their duty.

"This is hardly a case which can be met by imposing a fine," said the staid chairman of the Bench. "Here is a stranger from London who comes into this town and behaves in a most disgusting manner. Is anything known against the man?"

"Nothing, sir," said the jailer, regretfully.

"You will pay a fine of twenty shillings or go to prison for twenty-one days."

"I would much rather go to prison than pay," said Leon, truthfully.

So they committed him to the local jail, as he had expected. Twenty-one days later, looking very brown and fit, he burst into the flat and Manfred turned with outstretched hands.

"I heard you were back," said Leon, joyously. "I've had a great time! They rather upset my calculations by giving me three weeks instead of a month, and I was afraid that I'd get back before you."

"I came back yesterday," said George, and his eyes strayed to the sideboard.

Six large Spanish onions stood in a row, and Leon Gonsalez doubled up with mirth. It was not until he had changed into more presentable garments that he told of his experience.

"Bash Jones had undoubtedly homicidal plans," he said. "The most extraordinary case of facial anamorphosis I have seen. I worked with him in the tailor's shop. He is coming out next Monday."

"He welcomed you, I presume, when he discovered you were from Deptford?" said Manfred, dryly.

Leon nodded.

"He intends to kill his wife on the third of the month, which is the day after he is released," he said.

"Why so precise?" asked Manfred, in surprise.

"Because that is the only night she sleeps in the house alone. There are usually two young men lodgers who are railway men and these do duty until three in the morning on the third of every month."

"Is this the truth or are you making it up?" asked Manfred.

"I did make it up," admitted Gonsalez. "But this is the story I told and he swallowed it eagerly. The young men have no key, so they come in by the kitchen door, which is left unlocked. The kitchen door is reached by a narrow passage which runs the length of Little Mill Street and parallel with the houses. Oh, yes, he was frightfully anxious to secure information, and he told me that he would never come back to jail again except for a short visit. An interesting fellow. I think he had better die," said Leon, with some gravity. "Think of the possibilities for misery, George. This unfortunate girl, happy in her friends, well-bred——"

"Would you say that," smiled Manfred, "with Bash for a father?"

"Well-bred, I repeat," said Gonsalez, firmly. "Breeding is merely a quality acquired through lifelong association with gentlefolk. Put the son of a duke in the slums and he'll grow up a peculiar kind of slum child, but a slum child, nevertheless. Think of the horror of it. Dragging this child back to the kennels of Deptford, for

"He choked, turned to run, and fell, and the yellow gas rolled over him in a thick and turgid cloud."

that will be the meaning of it, supposing this Mr. Bash Jones does not kill his wife. If he kills her then the grisly truth is out. No, I think we had better settle this Mr. Bash Jones."

"I agree," said Manfred, puffing thoughtfully at his cigar, and Leon Gonsalez sat down at the table with Browning's poems open before him and read, pausing now and again to look thoughtfully into space as he elaborated the method by which Bash Jones should die

ON the afternoon of the third, Mrs. Amelia Jones was called away by telegram. She met Leon Gonsalez at Paddington Station.

"You have brought your key with you, Mrs. Jones?"

"Yes, sir," said the woman in surprise. Then: "Do you know that my husband is out of prison?"

"I know, I know," said Gonsalez, "and because he is free I want you to go away for a couple of nights. I have some friends in

Plymouth. They will probably meet you at the station, and if they do not meet you you must go to this address."

He gave her an address of a boarding-house that he had secured from a Plymouth newspaper.

"Here is some money. I insist upon your taking it. My friends are very anxious to help you."

She was in tears when he left her.

"You are sure you have locked up your house?" said Leon, at parting.

"I've got the key here, sir."

She opened her bag and he noticed that now her hands trembled all the time.

"Let me see," said Leon, taking the bag in his hand and peering at the interior in his short-sighted way. "Yes, there it is."

He put in his hand, brought it out apparently empty, and closed the bag again.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Jones," he said, "and don't lose courage."

WHEN dark fell Leon Gonsalez arrived in Little Mill Street carrying a bulky something in a black cloth bag. He entered the house unobserved, for the night was wet and gusty and Little Mill Street crouched over its scanty fires.

He closed the door behind him and with the aid of his pocket-lamp found his way to the one poor bedroom in the tiny house. He turned down the covers, humming to himself, then very carefully he removed the contents of the bag; the most important of which was a large glass globe.

Over this he carefully arranged a black wig and searched the room for articles of clothing which might be rolled into a bundle. When he had finished his work, he stepped back and regarded it with admiration. Then he went downstairs, unlocked the kitchen door, and to make absolutely certain crossed the little yard and examined the fastening of the gate which led from the lane. The lock apparently was permanently out of order and he went back satisfied.

In one corner of the room was a clothes-hanger, screened from view by a length of cheap cretonne. He had cleared this corner of its clothing to make up the bundle in the bed. Then he sat down in a chair and waited with the patience which is the peculiar attribute of the scientist.

The church bells had struck two when he heard the back-gate creak, and rising noiselessly took something from his pocket and stepped behind the cretonne curtain. It was not a house in which one could move without sound, for the floor-boards were old and creaky and every stair produced a crack. But the man who was creeping from step to step was an artist, and Leon heard no other sound until the door slowly opened and a figure came in.

It moved with stealthy steps across the room and stood for a few seconds by the side of the bulky figure in the bed. Apparently he listened and was satisfied. Then Leon saw a stick raised and fall.

Bash Jones did not say a word until he heard the crash of the broken glass. Then he uttered an oath and Leon heard him fumble in his pocket for his matches. The delay was fatal. The chlorine gas, compressed at a pressure of many atmospheres, surged up around him. He choked, turned to run, and fell, and the yellow gas rolled over him in a thick and turgid cloud.

Leon Gonsalez stepped from his place of concealment and the dying man, staring up, saw two enormous glass eyes and the snout-like nozzle of the respirator and went bewildered to his death.

Leon collected the broken glass and carefully wrapped the pieces in his bag. He replaced the clothes with the most extraordinary care and put away the wig and tidied the room before he opened the window and the door. Then he went to the front of the house and opened those windows, too. A south-wester was blowing, and by the morning the house would be free from gas.

Not until he was in the back-yard did he remove the gas-mask he wore and place that, too, in the bag.

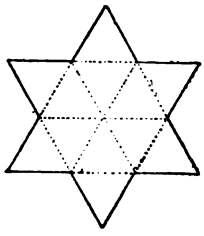
An hour later he was in his own bed in a deep, untroubled sleep.

MRS. JONES slept well that night, and in a dainty cubicle somewhere in the West of England a slim, girlish figure in pyjamas snuggled into her pillow and sighed happily.

But Bash Jones slept soundest of all.

(Next month: "The Man Who Was Happy.")

PERPLEXITIES. By HENRY E. DUDENEY.



567.—SQUARING A STAR.

AN ingenious American has just discovered that this six-pointed star can be cut into as few as five pieces that will fit together and form a perfect square. To perform the feat in seven pieces is quite easy, but to do it in five is a clever performance. I introduce the dotted lines merely to show the true proportions of the star, which is thus built up of twelve equilateral triangles.

568.—ALPHABETICAL SUMS.

THERE is a family resemblance between puzzles like our No. 555, where an arithmetical working has to be reconstructed from a few figures and a number of asterisks, and those in which every digit is represented by a letter, but they are really quite different. The resemblance lies in the similarity of the process of solving. Here is a little example of the latter class It can hardly be called difficult.

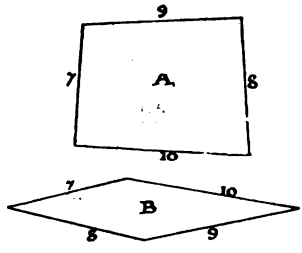
```
P R ) M T V V R ( R S R
      M V R
      -----
        K K V
        K M D
        -----
          M V R
          M V R
          -----
```

Can you reconstruct this simple division sum? Every digit is represented by a different letter.

569.—MR. GRINDLE'S GARDEN.

"MY neighbour," said Mr. Grindle, "generously offered me, for a garden, as much land as I could enclose with four straight walls measuring 7, 8, 9, and 10 rods in length respectively."

"And what was the largest area you were able to enclose?" asked his friend.



Perhaps the reader can discover Mr. Grindle's correct answer. You see, in the case of three sides the triangle can only enclose one area, but with four sides it is quite different. For example, it is obvious that the area of diagram A is greater than that of B, though the sides are the same. The answer is absurdly easy to obtain if you happen to know the rule in such cases. But do you?

570.—A NEW WORD CHAIN.

I FOUND this quite an entertaining little letter puzzle. I proposed to form a chain of words in the following manner, so that all the capital letters, except the first and last, should serve a double purpose, the last letter of one word forming the first of the next throughout :—

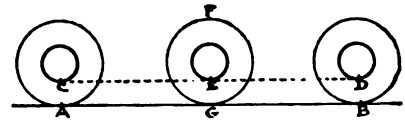
A d v e r B a s i C a r D i n E, and so on.

I soon arrived at the conclusion that all the letters of the alphabet taken for the capitals in their regular order is impossible, owing to difficulties with Q, J, and V as final letters, but with the amended condition that the twenty-six capitals may be taken in any order I was rather surprised to find that it may be done without much difficulty. Every word in my solution is contained in any ordinary English dictionary. How many minutes will it take you to construct such a chain?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

563.—A WHEEL FALLACY.

THE inner circle has half the diameter of the whole wheel, and therefore has half the circumference. If it merely ran along the imaginary line C D it would require two revolutions: after the first, the point D would be at E. But the point B would be at F, instead of at G, which is absurd. The fact is the inner circle makes only one revolution, but in passing from one position to the other it progresses partly by its own



revolution and partly by carriage on the wheel. The point A gets to B entirely by its own revolution, but if you imagine a point at the very centre of the wheel (a point has no dimensions and therefore no circumference), it goes the same distance entirely by what I have called carriage. The curve described by the passage of the point A to B is a common cycloid, but the point C in going to D describes a curtate trochoid —which implies that both points "get there," only by different means!

564.—A CHARADE.

FOUR—SCORE.

565.—BUYING BUNS.

THERE must have been three boys and three girls, each of whom received two buns at three a penny and one bun at two a penny, the cost of which would be exactly sevenpence.

566.—CURIOUS MULTIPLICATION.

IN the first column write in the successive remainders, which are 1 0 0 0 0 1 1, or reversed, 1 1 0 0 0 0 1. This is 97 in the binary scale of notation, or 1 plus 2^5 plus 2^6. In the second column (after rejecting the numbers opposite to the remainder 0) we add together 23×1, 23×2^5, 23×2^6, equals 2,231. The whole effect of the process is now obvious. It is merely an operation in the binary scale.

555.—THE FOUR FOURS.

THE first two solutions, with divisors 442 and 444, given in our July issue, are incorrect, as they involve the omission of an asterisk in the fifth line. They should be

```
846 ) 1200474 ( 1419
848 ) 1202464 ( 1418
```

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Tapestries	12/9 „ 27/6
Reps and Mattings	4/11 „ 11/6
Poplins	4/11 „ 10/6
Madras Muslins	2/11½ „ 11/6
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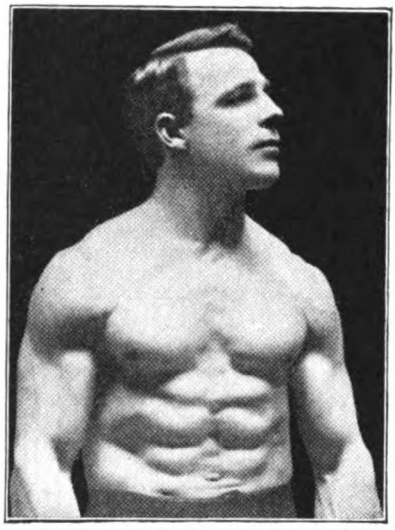

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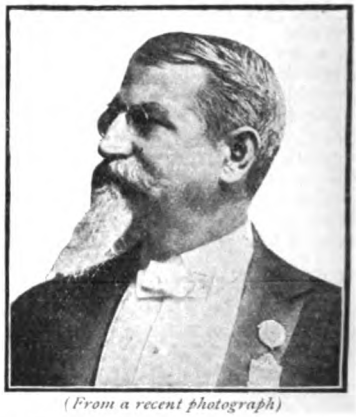
I WAS BALD

I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet thirty years ago I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald-head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.



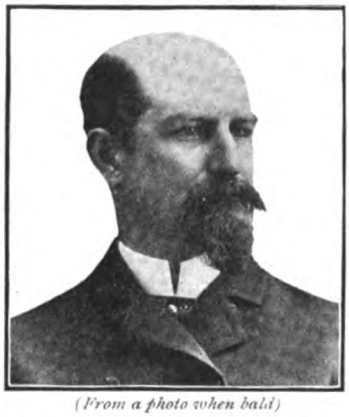
(From a recent photograph)

Seeking a Hair Growth

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that in the hope of growing new hair I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "the white brother without a scalp-lock."

American Indians Never Bald

I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands round their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret? Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.



(From a photo when bald)

My Hair Grew Again

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly-kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots. Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly. The hair that grows is strong and silk-like. It has beautiful lustre, and imparts the appearance of health and vigour.

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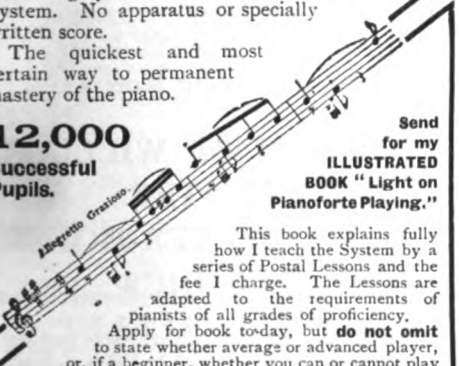

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"A new type! . . . . . the brainy athlete!"

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There is nothing secret about my methods, they are the simplest in the world and, because of their simplicity, are the best; but the key is known only to myself. I have formed it as the result of years of experience, tests, and trials. There is nothing uncertain about it, as it is natural and positive in its results. It does not matter how weak or strong you are, you can make yourself absolutely fit by my advice.

Thirty Thousand Pupils have thanked me during years for what it has been my pleasure to do for them, and I have received whole-hearted recognition from such well-known authorities as Dr. Dale, Dr. Lee, John Marks, Hackenschmidt, Apollo, and Madrali.

If you have **HEALTH**, value it, and obtain that reserve of energy by mental control so necessary in present-day life.

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Sir,—Please send me, gratis, a copy of your booklet, "Physical Culture Simplified."

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THE SEPTEMBER

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A NEW SCIENTIFIC TREATMENT
bringing speedy relief and a certain cure for
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Years have passed since I was freed from the drink habit. Since then I have been the means of aiding **thousands of men and women** to give up alcohol. Some have willingly taken treatment, others have been saved without knowing the cause.

The drink craze disappears, and is replaced by a more normal condition of appetite, nerves, etc. **The improvement in the health** of an ex-drinker is marvellous when he gives up alcohol. Men **drinking a bottle of whisky or more daily** are safely and effectively stopped. **No danger to health, but a steady improvement manifests itself from day to day.** There is no inclination for alcohol; the former drinker is surprised and delighted at the great change.

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I will send you my book in plain, sealed envelope promptly, post paid, on receipt of your request. I appeal especially to those who have wasted money on ineffective remedies. Correspondence strictly confidential. Address:

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The symptoms of Neurasthenia are many and varied. They are mainly mental or nervous, and often the victim is quite unaware of the fact that he or she is travelling rapidly towards Nervous Exhaustion and Nervous Prostration.

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IF SO, CURATIVE ELECTRICITY WILL PUT YOU RIGHT.

The Pulvermacher Appliances are the only inventions for the administration of curative electricity, endorsed by over fifty leading Doctors and by the official Academy of Medicine in Paris.

HAVE YOU ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS?

Are you Nervous, Timid, or Indecisive?
Do you lack Self-Confidence?
Do you dread open or closed spaces?
Are you wanting in Will Power?
Are you "fidgety," restless or sleepless?
Do you blush or turn pale readily?
Do you shrink from strange company?
Are you subject to sudden impulses?
Do you crave for stimulants or drugs?

If so, you can safely assume that you are suffering from Neurasthenia. The neurasthenic also often suffer from **Indigestion, Liver Troubles, Constipation, Palpitation, Loss of Appetite, Excess of Appetite,** and a host of other disorders due to faulty functioning of various organs. Electricity is the only force that naturally supplies this deficiency of Nerve Force, and restores tone to the whole nervous system. To-day you can be

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by simply wearing the Pulvermacher Appliances, which are light, easy, and comfortable to wear. They give no shock, but all the time they are being worn they supply the nerve centres with a continuous flow of electricity, naturally stimulate the circulation of the blood, and increase nerve nutrition.

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By posting this **FREE FORM TO-DAY** you will receive the **"Guide to Health and Strength."** You place yourself under no obligation by applying for this book and particulars of the Pulvermacher Appliances.

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Post to the Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute. Ltd., 56, Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.
Strand Magazine, September, 1921.

LOUIS DE ROUGEMONT

By VICTOR PITT-KETHLEY.

ONE day early in 1898 there walked into the offices of *The Wide World Magazine* a shabbily-dressed man apparently about sixty years old. He had a thin, striking face, which, though seamed with countless wrinkles, yet conveyed an odd suggestion of youth. His eyes were particularly bright and keen, and his high forehead was crowned by a thick shock of iron-grey hair.

The stranger—who spoke in odd, jerky little sentences, for all the world like the English of a French child—expressed a wish to see the Editor on private and particular business, and he brought forth a letter of introduction from Mr. Henniker Heaton, at that time M.P. for Canterbury, and the pioneer of penny Imperial postage.

Mr. Henniker Heaton's note was laconic, but sufficiently impressive. It ran somewhat as follows: "*I send you a man who has a story to tell which, if true, will stagger the world.*"

Now, stories calculated to stagger the world are never too plentiful, and no journalist worthy of his salt would care to miss one, and the result was that the caller was speedily shown into the Editor's room. Here he perched himself nervously on the edge of a chair, looking around him with quaint little birdlike jerks of the head. Anxious to put him at his ease, as he showed no sign of opening the conversation, the Editor asked him his name, which was not given in the letter.

"I am Louis de Rougemont," said the stranger, simply.

Then, in response to further questions, he proceeded to outline his story, speaking quickly but quietly, sometimes using his hands or his shoulders to help out his meaning, sometimes at a loss for a word.

He seemed entirely oblivious to the effect of his narration; he told his tale much as a man might describe a bus-ride. And yet his story was astounding enough in all conscience—the "most amazing experience a man ever lived to tell," as it was later described.

For all practical purposes, here was a Robinson Crusoe in real life—a man who had not only been cast away among cannibal savages in the wilds of unexplored Australia, but for *thirty years* had lived among them as one of themselves, marrying a woman of the tribe, rising to the rank of chief and medicine-man, and going through incredible adventures before another turn of the wheel of Fate finally threw him into the midst of civilization again to take up once more the unfamiliar ways and speech of the white man.

Louis de Rougemont told his story, and, although the Editor was an experienced journalist, he heard the remarkable narrative with growing amazement. On the face of it it was ridiculous, incredible; the stranger was just another of the imaginative people who almost daily came to his office with cock-and-bull stories that they hoped to get paid for. And yet this wild tale had impressed Mr. Henniker Heaton, himself an Australian authority who had written important books concerning the aboriginals.

Surely no would-be "faker" would deliberately choose such a man as his sponsor? The stranger's trustful, child-like face, moreover, and his artless replies to questions, gave the Editor pause. This was no glib-tongued impostor, if he knew anything of the type; and there was a look in the bright eyes, and something about the deeply-lined face, that seemed to stamp this odd caller as one who had suffered much and seen many strange things.

Thoughtfully weighing his words, the journalist suggested that, if M. de Rougemont's statement would bear verification, he might be able to publish the story, but the verification would have to be ample. The stranger merely smiled; he did not appear particularly interested. He was quite willing to be tested, he said—why not, when he spoke the truth? If there were people who knew the tribes he had sojourned among, the country he had visited, he would talk to them or answer any questions. Yes; he would do anything the Editor wished.

What the story was, how it was tested, in fact, the whole history of the publication of Louis de Rougemont's narrative, appears in the September *Wide World Magazine*, which was published on Monday last. Be sure and get a copy.

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For Summer Time Fabrics
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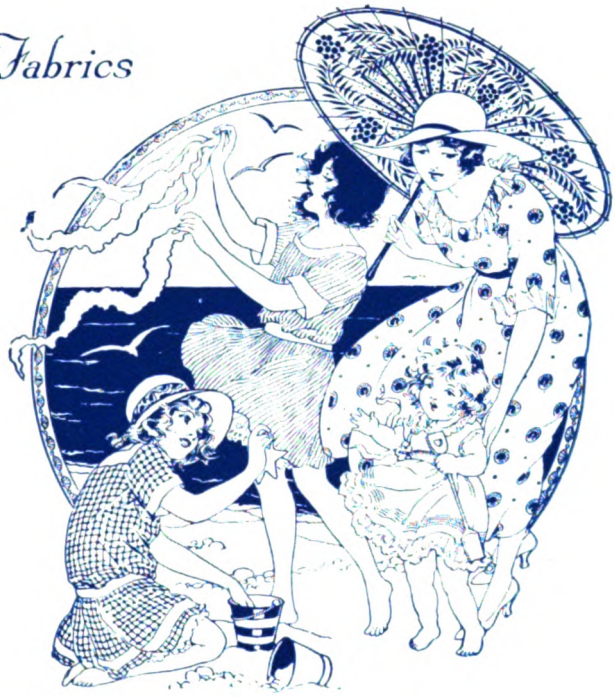
It is a pleasure to use Lux as well as to wear the dainty fabrics washed with it. In a bowl of warm water the pure Lux flakes are whisked into a foaming lather in an instant. Gently squeeze the creamy suds through and through the texture, then rinse in clean water. Lux coaxes rather than forces the dirt from dainty fabrics



The Children go down to play on the beach –

in frocks and dresses kept spotlessly clean and comfortable with LUX. Their cool and dainty underwear is also preserved with this wonderful preparation.

Mother's dresses and smart jumpers are maintained in all their charm with LUX. And when Father joins the family party at the sea his flannels look as good as new—thanks to LUX.

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Packets (two sizes) may be obtained everywhere.

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The Dainty SOAP

For Health & Beauty.

PARIS. "ERASMIC" Perfumers, 13A New Bond St LONDON. W. BRUSSELS

A NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY by A. CONAN DOYLE

SEE Fry's PAGE 22.

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

Stories by
P.G. WODEHOUSE
EDGAR WALLACE
F. BRITTEN AUSTIN
W.B. MAXWELL
:: ETC. ::

October, 1921.

— A —
GOOD TURN
When you have read this copy pass it on to a friend.

No. 370
VOL 62

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Days of Play and Healthy Toil

Here we see Farmer Brown graciously accepting from the youngsters Mackintosh's Toffee - de - Luxe, for it is a great favourite alike with old and young.

In 4-lb. Family Tins, Small Tins, and loose by weight. Confectioners everywhere are selling the original pre - war quality of Toffee - de - Luxe ; the delicious quality that made Toffee-de-Luxe famous and which is unrivalled in sweetmeats.

Every bit as good as the plain Toffee-de-Luxe are Egg and Cream Toffee-de-Luxe and Chocolate Toffee-de-Luxe.

Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe has the largest sale in the world.

MACKINTOSH'S
Toffee - de - Luxe

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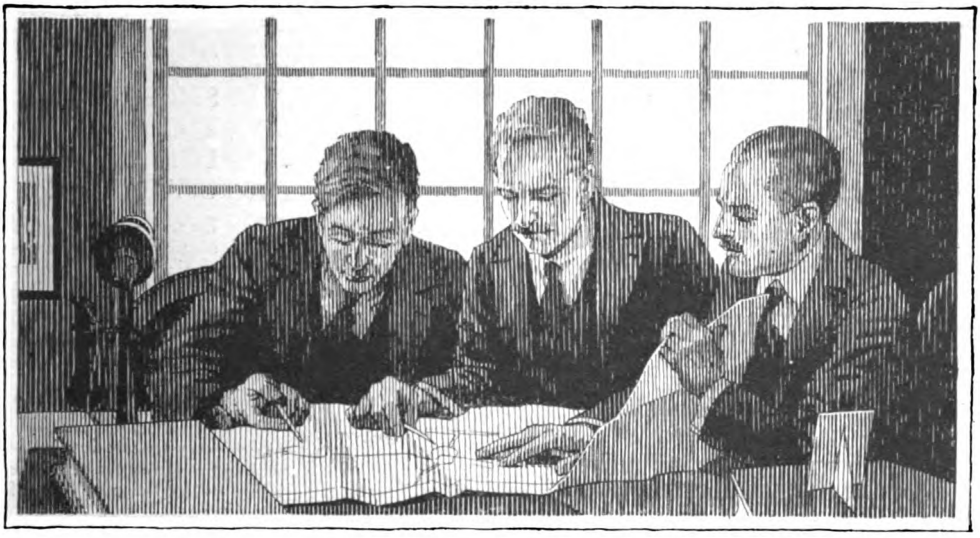
CONCENTRATION



Three big men in business. The Secretary, the Accountant, and the Manager. Concentrate on qualifying yourself to fill one of these posts, and the School of Accountancy will train you until you succeed

—*until you succeed!*

"Yes," you say, "but how long will it take me to succeed, and how much will it cost me if the training is spread over a long period?"

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No, but we do not undertake to train *every man* who applies to us for enrolment.

If preliminary correspondence leads us to believe that a man is not sufficiently intelligent to benefit by the tuition we offer, we frankly tell him so, and do not enrol him or accept any fee.

Biographies of Successful Students

By J. D. C. MACKAY.

Principal of The School of Accountancy.

No. 2.—HARDIE

Hardie was a Law Clerk who elected to train for the London Association of Accountants' examination.

He proved himself to be a man of determination, and quickly passed his examination under our training.

After qualifying he was appointed Accountant on a contract involving a huge expenditure of public money. As a Contract Accountant he made much more money than he did as a Law Clerk; he was frequently given substantial increases, and after two years' service was made Supervising Accountant on all contracts his firm held.

Like most active men Hardie became imbued with the spirit of independence and eventually commenced business for himself as Accountant and Auditor. He now enjoys a substantial and lucrative practice in an important provincial town and has everything to make him comfortable and happy.

The only part of the above biography which is not true is the name, which for obvious reasons is fictitious. Otherwise it is a perfectly faithful record of one of The School of Accountancy students, and is typical of hundreds of other records equally inspiring to men who are prepared to undertake a few months' home training in order to equip themselves for bigger, better paid positions.

It is the second of a series of similar biographies published from time to time in our advertisements.

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the Ideal Tobacco

is a subtle blend of cool-smoking, even-burning, rare-flavoured growths. It is *medium*, coarse in cut, of rich amber-and-black colour, with an aroma one can almost *eat*. Carrying no appreciable moisture, it "bulks" well to the ounce.

Each package encloses the guarantee label. This safeguards you if you *should* get a packet out-of-condition—an uncommon occurrence.

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We are anxious that the smoker who buys **Barney's Mixture** should smoke it at its best. Should it show any sign of climatic deterioration, kindly return this packet to John Sinclair, Ltd., Newcastle-on-Tyne or Edinburgh. A fresh packet will be sent per return and your postage refunded.

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the ounce.

In three strengths, each in 1 oz. lead packets and 2 oz. (flat) Tins for the Pocket; and in 4, 8, and 16 oz. Tins for Home use.

Barney's pleases. It gives a sense of quiet satisfaction which continues through *each* and *every* pipe. It needs careful filling. The long, coarse cut gives *cool* and *even* smoking. Fill this way :—

Take the pipe in your *left* hand. Fill gently, a little at a time, with the *right* hand. See that you get a medium, even pressure in the bowl. The correct density is secured by using the third or little finger of the *right* hand to press the Tobacco home. The forefinger has a "ramming" effect and should *not* be used.

Pipe-smoking is an enduring pleasure, costing very little. It is the joy-of-life to some men. Others are aware of all it means, but fail to realise its experience. Barney's is *medium*. Filled into a *good* Pipe in the way we say, it reduces Pipe-joy to Formula for 70% of smokers. Parsons' Pleasure (mild) and Punchbowle (full strength) are its variations. With rare exceptions they serve similarly the remaining 30%.

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(9)

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National Sales Bureau, 24, Holborn, E.C.1.
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Smokers abroad who wish to try "*cheery, chummy Barney's from the North Country*," can have a 2-lb. Tin sent ex-bond at a cost of 20/- *plus* postage, either direct or through the V.P.P. or C.O.D. systems.

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Ex-bond Prices apply only to orders sent Abroad and of not less than 2-lb. The Home price of Barney's and its Kindred Tobaccos is 1/1 the ounce for each and every ounce.

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An extra fine Toilet Soap for dainty hands and delicate complexions.

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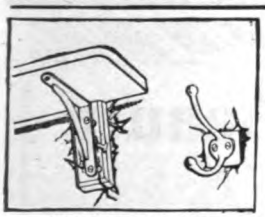
By Appointment.



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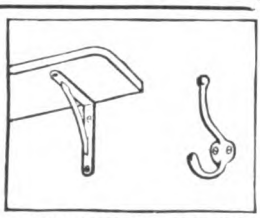

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One of the most difficult jobs is to put up a picture or shelf where the wall is either too soft for a nail to hold or too hard to get a nail into. An attempt usually results in much damage to the wall, and even if the job is accomplished it is not very satisfactory or lasting.

A Rawlplug is a small cylindrical body of stiffened fibres of roughly the same bore as the screw to be used. To fix, simply make a small hole with the tool supplied, push the Rawlplug into position, and turn home the screw as if in wood—and it is perfectly fast.

The Rawlplug is so made that immediately the screw enters it expands automatically against the sides of the hole; obtaining thereby a firm grip of the surrounding plaster or other materials, and a perfect thread is formed in the fibre.

HOUSEHOLD OUTFIT.
50 Rawlplugs, 50 Screws, Rawlplug Tool,
3/6
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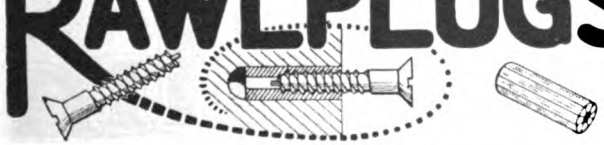

MECHANIC'S OUTFIT.
100 Rawlplugs & supply of Screws, special Rawlplug Tool, 2 Bits,
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A DEVICE WHICH ENABLES AN ORDINARY SCREW TO HOLD IN ANY MATERIAL.

Invisible when in position.
Will hold half-a-ton in brick.

No skilled handling required.
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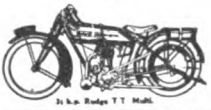

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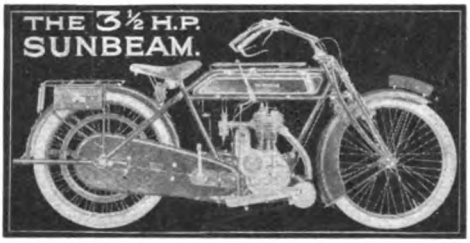

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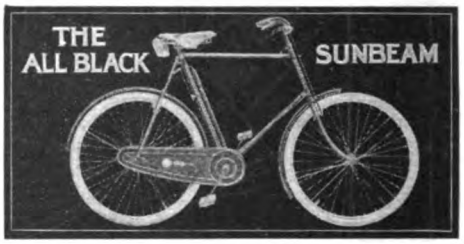

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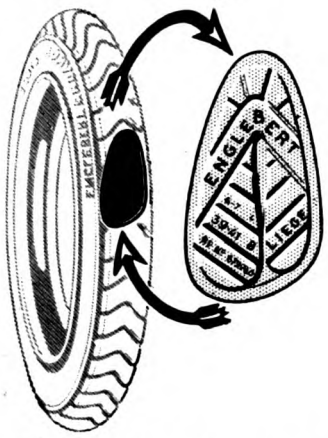

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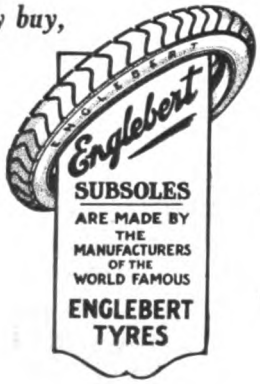

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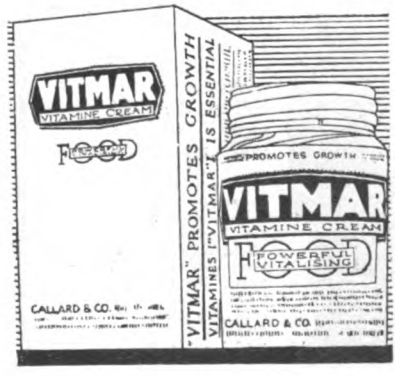

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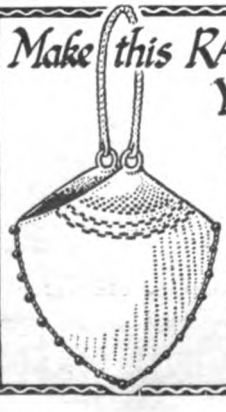

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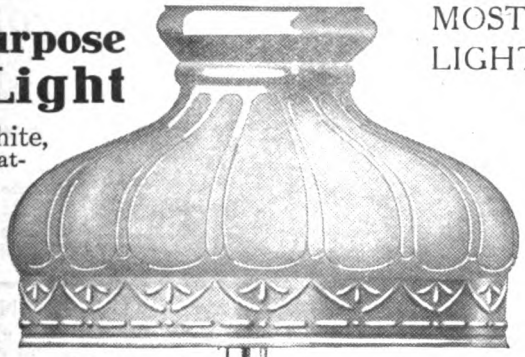

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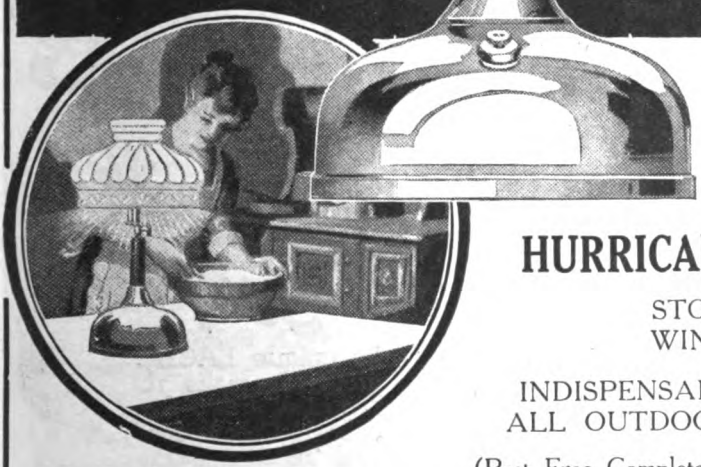

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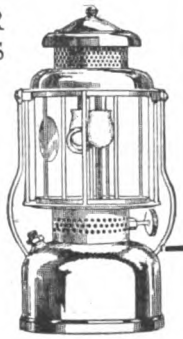

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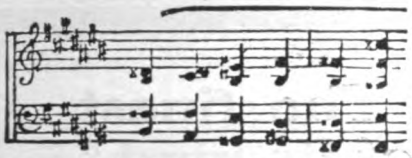

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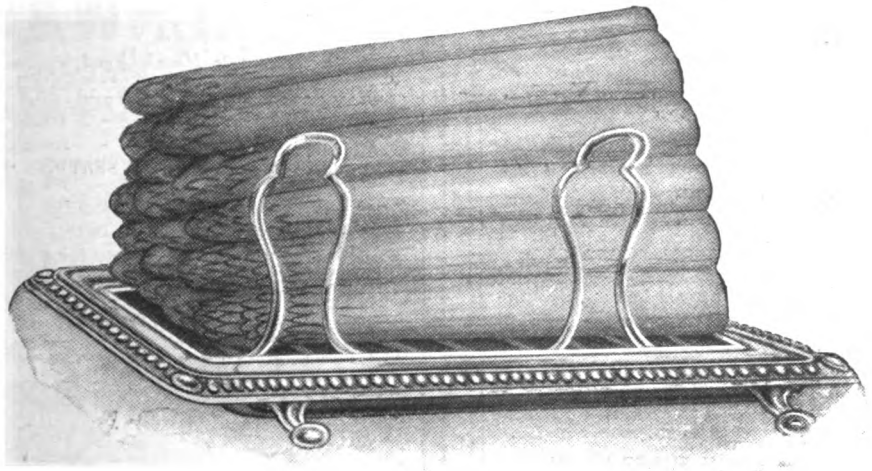

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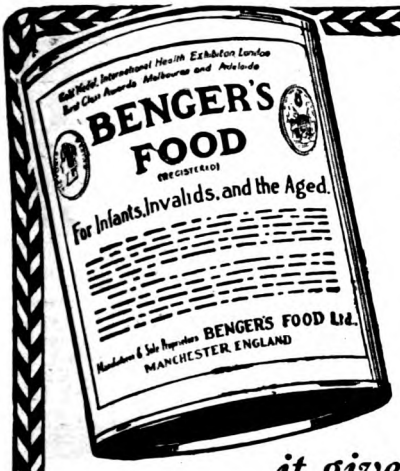

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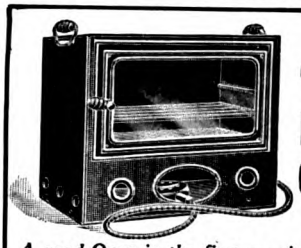

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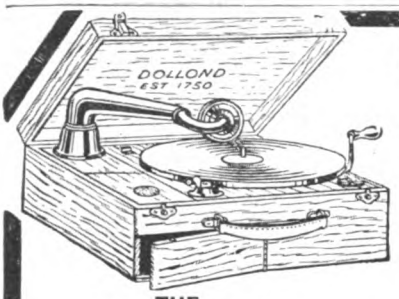

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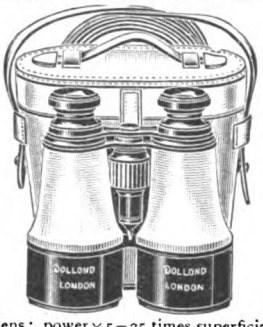

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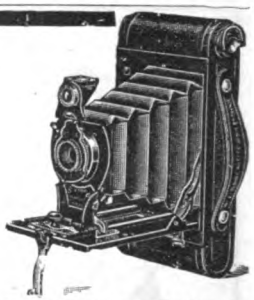

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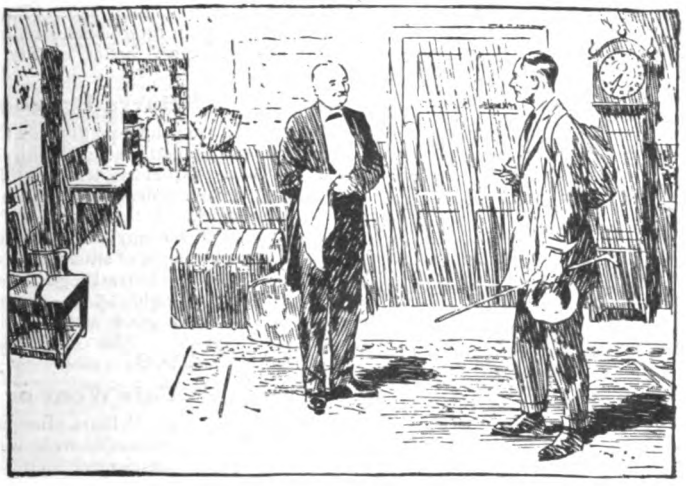

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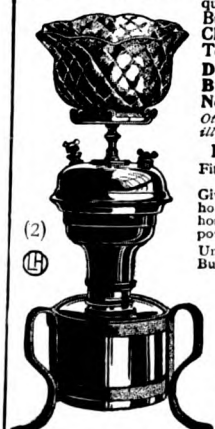

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No. 1 SIZE. Fitted complete, **41/6.** Gives 50 c.p. for 5 hours, 40 c.p. for 6½ hours, or 30 candle-power for 8 hours.

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Unless otherwise ordered, we fit 50 c.p. Burner. Sent post free U.K.; extra abroad.

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The same lamp is supplied with special fittings for Drawing Room, Hall, Kitchen, Bedroom, Corridor, Garage, Stable, etc., all of which are described and illustrated in our

FREE BOOK ON LAMPS FOR COUNTRY LIGHTING
Send a postcard for it to-day.

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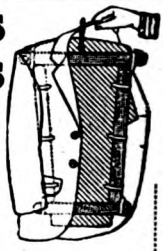
A famous Trouser Press



and what it does for thousands of men.

The **Portable "Alpha" No. 2 Trouser Press and Suit Hanger (Pat.)** perfectly creases and stretches trousers, and leaves coat and vest wrinkle-free. **Made of hard wood and spring steel,** it lasts practically a lifetime. Packs into 3 x 2 x 2½ ins., and weighs 20 ozs.

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Inside a Beacon Sporting Oilskin, the weather is always dry. No Rain that ever fell could get inside. Snow, Sleet, Hail, Wind, and blinding Spindrift *have* to stay outside too, for Beacons were designed to give bone-dry comfort to outdoor men in *every* kind of weather. *They do this well,* or money back. Falkland Coats in Black, **35/-**; Bronze or Dark Green, **40/-**; Sou'westers to match, **5/- & 6/-** respectively. Post Free U.K.; extra abroad. *The illustration shows the Falkland Oilskin. 60,000 men wear it. It has a smooth, dry finish, wide skirt, easy Raglan shoulders, smart, roomy, Sporting cut, and is guaranteed not to stick or leak.*

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DISSOLVES URIC ACID

THOROUGHLY CLEANSES SWEETENS & PURIFIES THE ENTIRE DIGESTIVE TRACT

RIDS THE BLOOD OF IMPURITIES AND POISONS

ENSURES THAT NO CONGESTION OF ANY SORT EXISTS IN THE BODY

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NOT only will you experience great comfort in wearing them but you will find that your hose will last longer, due to their being fitted with the **"Grip that Grips and never Slips."** and does not tear the finest Hose.

They appeal to every woman because they are thoroughly reliable. Their strong elastics are full of vitality.

Ask your Draper to supply you with "Sphere" Suspenders.

SPHERE SUSPENDER CO.
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"I GIVE MY WIFE £1,000"

"And I am a poor man, too—really much poorer than one of the so-called 'New poor.' Yet, on my wife's birthday, I gave her £1,000.

"When we sat down for breakfast on that memorable morning I produced a document, and handed it to her with the remark, 'Now listen while I tell you why I am giving you this £1,000.'

"This is an investment policy with the Sun Life of Canada, and I have made the first payment of £58 6s., and should I die to-morrow, either through illness or accident, you would receive £1,000, plus half the deposit I have just paid—altogether £1,029 3s.

"This policy is to be in force for twenty years. Now suppose, as I am now forty, that I live to be sixty years of age, we shall receive from the Sun Life of Canada about £1,450—another and a better birthday gift for both of us, eh?"

"But," said my wife, "how does it happen that you are entitled to a sum of £1,450 in twenty years?"

"Why, in just this way: all the deposits are really investments, and my dividends accumulate until the twenty years are up. On the basis of past experience these dividends will amount to £450."

"It's splendid," she replied.

"Yes, it is," I went on. "But what I like best, though, is that during all the twenty years, if anything should happen to me, you and the children will at least be secure from want. . . . For instance, if I were taken off in the twelfth year you are bound to receive £1,394 4s.—that is, the original £1,000 plus fifty per cent. of all my deposits.

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"Well, John," my wife remarked, "this is some birthday gift. I admire your thoughtfulness for myself and the children. I can't help thinking, too, that we have never spent money to better purpose. But, my boy, I don't want to draw that £1,000 and half the deposits made. You are going to live for the full twenty years. We shall be getting on, then, and £1,450 will be very useful."

"Rather," I said, "it's a fine provision for our old age."

And that's how I gave my wife £1,000.

The Assets of the Sun Life of Canada exceed £23,000,000, and the company is under strict Government supervision. Anyone interested should write at once for full particulars, giving his or her age, and the amount it is proposed to invest annually. All communications treated in confidence. Write to J. F. Junkin (Manager), Sun Life of Canada, 6, Canada House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C.2.

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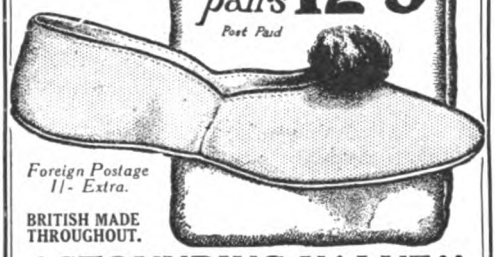

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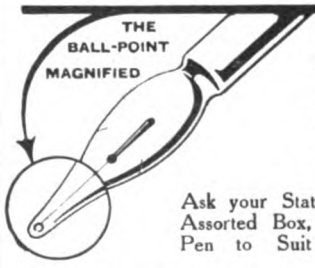

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See how your teeth look then

Here is a new way of teeth cleaning—a modern, scientific way. Authorities approve it. Leading dentists everywhere advise it.

Ask for this ten-day test. Watch the results of it. See for yourself what it means to your teeth—what it means in your home.

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Film has been the great tooth problem. A viscous film clings to your teeth, enters crevices and remains. Old ways of brushing do not effectively combat it. Very few people escape its effects.

Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. It is the basis of tartar. It holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth, and the acid may cause decay.

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Dental science has now found ways to daily combat that film. Careful tests have amply proved them. They are now embodied, with other most important factors, in a dentifrice called Pepsodent.

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Send the coupon for a 10-Day Tube. Note how clean the teeth feel after using. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as the film-coats disappear. Watch the other good effects.

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Mail 10-Day Tube of Pepsodent to—

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We supply (direct only) on approval, carriage paid in U.K., and undertake to accept return at our expense and to refund the price if any chair should fail to suit on receipt.

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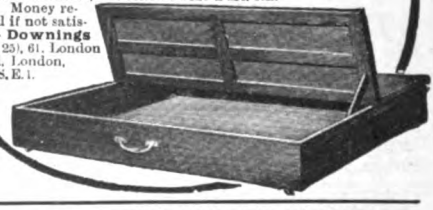

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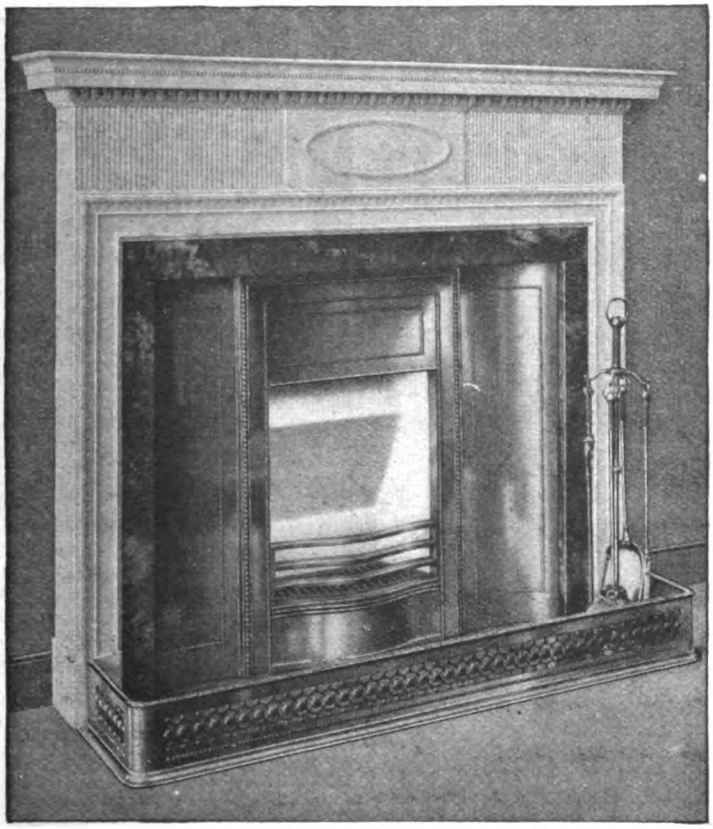

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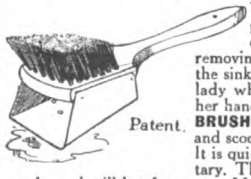
SAVE YOUR TIME! AND YOUR HANDS!



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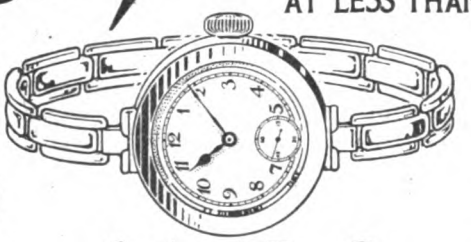

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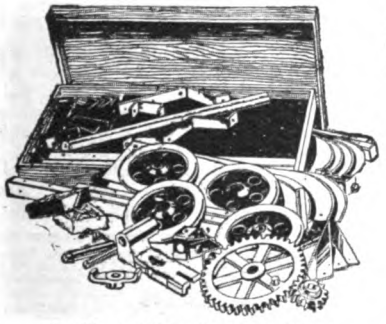

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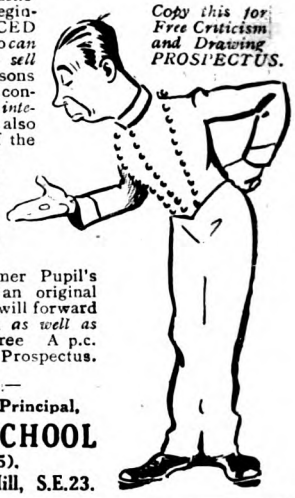

If you copy this former Pupil's Sketch, or send me an original Drawing (preferred), I will forward you a helpful criticism *as well as* the Prospectus, post free. A p.c. *alone* will bring you the Prospectus.

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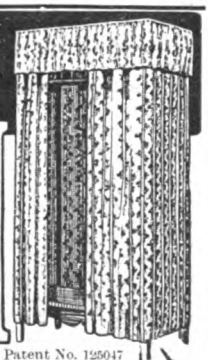
A great boon in Flats and small Houses



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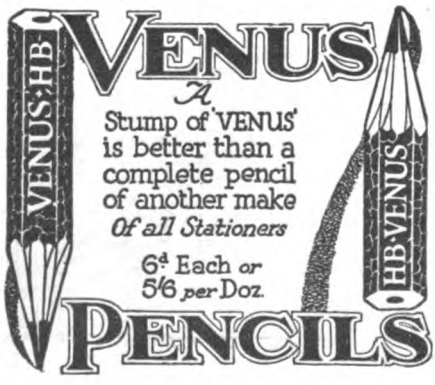

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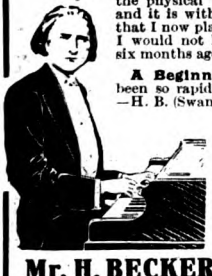

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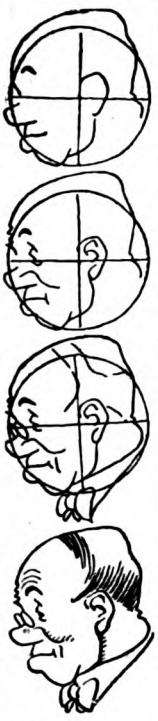

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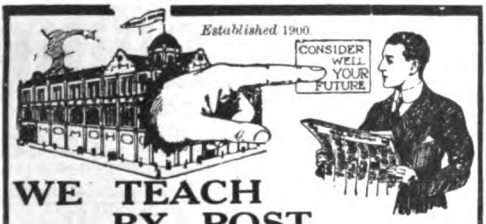

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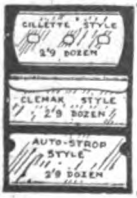

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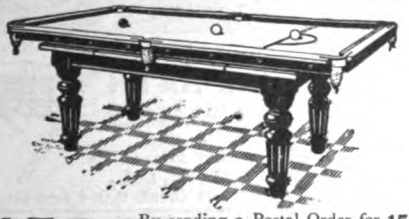

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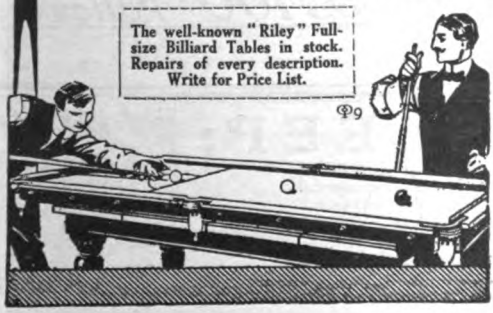

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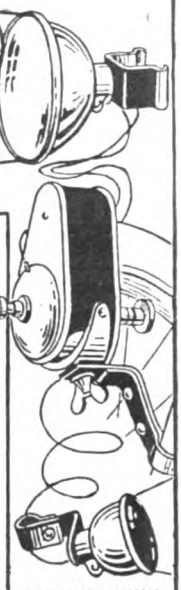

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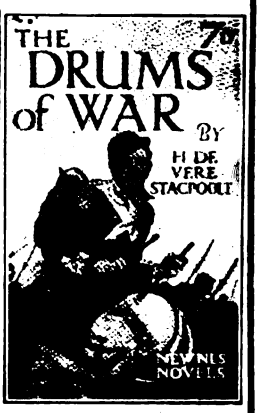

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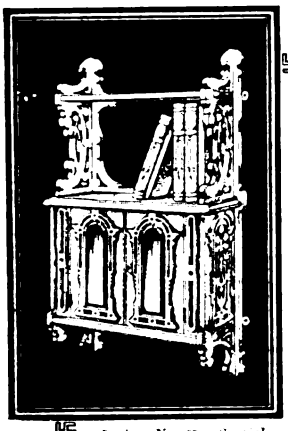

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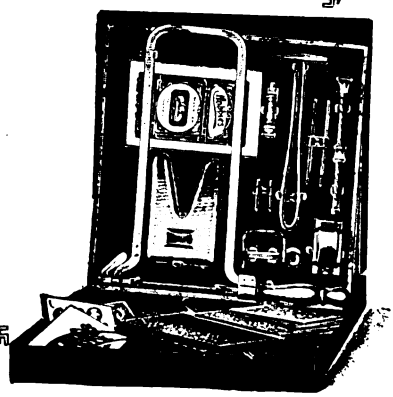

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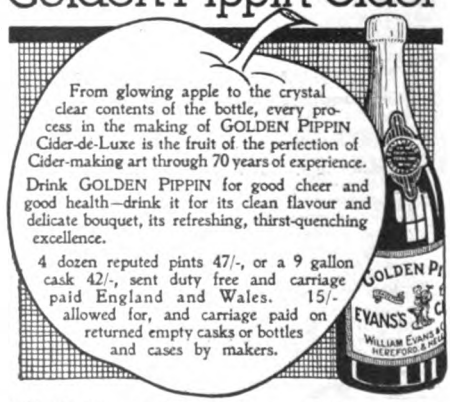

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Contents for October, 1921.

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"HIS THICK STICK HALF RAISED, HE WAS CROUCHING FOR HIS FINAL SPRING AND BLOW WHEN A COOL, SARDONIC VOICE GREETED HIM FROM THE OPEN BEDROOM DOOR: 'DON'T BREAK IT, COUNT! DON'T BREAK IT!'"

(*See page* 291.)

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MAZARIN STONE

A NEW SHERLOCK HOLMES STORY

BY

A. Conan Doyle

ILLUSTRATED BY A. GILBERT R.O.I.

IT was pleasant to Dr. Watson to find himself once more in the untidy room of the first floor in Baker Street which had been the starting-point of so many remarkable adventures. He looked round him at the scientific charts upon the wall, the acid-charred bench of chemicals, the violin-case leaning in the corner, the coal-scuttle, which contained of old the pipes and tobacco. Finally, his eyes came round to the fresh and smiling face of Billy, the young but very wise and tactful page, who had helped a little to fill up the gap of loneliness and isolation which surrounded the saturnine figure of the great detective.

"It all seems very unchanged, Billy. You don't change, either. I hope the same can be said of him?"

Billy glanced, with some solicitude, at the closed door of the bedroom.

"I think he's in bed and asleep," he said.

It was seven in the evening of a lovely summer's day, but Dr. Watson was sufficiently familiar with the irregularity of his old friend's hours to feel no surprise at the idea.

"That means a case, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir; he is very hard at it just now. I'm frightened for his health. He gets paler and thinner, and he eats nothing. 'When will you be pleased to dine, Mr. Holmes?' Mrs. Hudson asked. 'Seven-thirty, the day after to-morrow,' said he. You know his way when he is keen on a case."

"Yes, Billy, I know."

"He's following someone. Yesterday he was out as a workman looking for a job. To-day he was an old woman. Fairly took me in, he did, and I ought to know his ways by now." Billy pointed with a grin to a very baggy parasol which leaned against the sofa. "That's part of the old woman's outfit," he said.

"But what is it all about, Billy?"

Billy sank his voice, as one who discusses great secrets of State. "I don't mind telling you, sir, but it should go no farther. It's this case of the Crown diamond."

"What—the hundred - thousand - pound burglary?"

"Yes, sir. They must get it back, sir. Why, we had the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary both sitting on that very sofa. Mr. Holmes was very nice to them. He soon put them at their ease and promised he would do all he could. Then there is Lord Cantlemere——"

"Ah!"

"Yes, sir; you know what that means. He's a stiff 'un, sir, if I may say so. I can get along with the Prime Minister, and I've nothing against the Home Secretary, who

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seemed a civil, obliging sort of man, but I can't stand his lordship. Neither can Mr. Holmes, sir. You see, he don't believe in Mr. Holmes and he was against employing him. He'd *rather* he failed."

"And Mr. Holmes knows it?"

"Mr. Holmes always knows whatever there is to know."

"Well, we'll hope he won't fail and that Lord Cantlemere will be confounded. But I say, Billy, what is that curtain for across the window?"

"Mr. Holmes had it put up there three days ago. We've got something funny behind it."

Billy advanced and drew away the drapery which screened the alcove of the bow window.

Dr. Watson could not restrain a cry of amazement. There was a facsimile of his old friend, dressing-gown and all, the face turned three-quarters towards the window and downwards, as though reading an invisible book, while the body was sunk deep in an armchair. Billy detached the head and held it in the air.

"We put it at different angles, so that it may seem more life-like. I wouldn't dare touch it if the blind were not down. But when it's up you can see this from across the way."

"We used something of the sort once before."

'Before my time," said Billy. He drew the window curtains apart and looked out into the street. "There are folk who watch us from over yonder. I can see a fellow now at the window. Have a look for yourself."

WATSON had taken a step forward when the bedroom door opened, and the long, thin form of Holmes emerged, his face pale and drawn, but his step and bearing as active as ever. With a single spring he was at the window, and had drawn the blind once more.

"That will do, Billy," said he. "You were in danger of your life then, my boy, and I can't do without you just yet. Well, Watson, it is good to see you in your old quarters once again. You come at a critical moment."

"So I gather."

"You can go, Billy. That boy is a problem, Watson. How far am I justified in allowing him to be in danger?"

"Danger of what, Holmes?"

"Of sudden death. I'm expecting something this evening."

"Expecting what?"

"To be murdered, Watson."

"No, no; you are joking, Holmes!"

"Even my limited sense of humour could evolve a better joke than that. But we may be comfortable in the meantime, may we not? Is alcohol permitted? The gasogene and cigars are in the old place. Let me see you once more in the customary armchair. You have not, I hope, learned to despise my pipe and my lamentable tobaccc? It has to take the place of food these days."

"But why not eat?"

"Because the faculties become refined when you starve them. Why, surely, as a doctor, my dear Watson, you must admit that what your digestion gains in the way of blood supply is so much lost to the brain. I am a brain, Watson. The rest of me is a mere appendix. Therefore, it is the brain I must consider."

"But this danger, Holmes?"

"Ah, yes; in case it should come off, it would perhaps be as well that you should burden your memory with the name and address of the murderer. You can give it to Scotland Yard, with my love and a parting blessing. Sylvius is the name—Count Negretto Sylvius. Write it down, man, write it down! 136, Moorside Gardens, N.W. Got it?"

Watson's honest face was twitching with anxiety. He knew only too well the immense risks taken by Holmes, and was well aware that what he said was more likely to be under-statement than exaggeration. Watson was always the man of action, and he rose to the occasion.

"Count me in, Holmes. I have nothing to do for a day or two."

"Your morals don't improve, Watson. You have added fibbing to your other vices. You bear every sign of the busy medical man, with calls on him every hour."

"Not such important ones. But can't you have this fellow arrested?"

"Yes, Watson, I could. That's what worries him so."

"But why don't you?"

"Because I don't know where the diamond is."

"Ah! Billy told me—the missing Crown jewel!"

"Yes, the great yellow Mazarin stone. I've cast my net and I have my fish. But I have not got the stone. What is the use of taking *them?* We can make the world a better place by laying them by the heels. But that is not what I am out for. It's the stone I want."

"And is this Count Sylvius one of your fish?"

"Yes, and he's a shark. He bites. The other is Sam Merton, the boxer. Not a bad fellow, Sam, but the Count has used him. Sam's not a shark. He is a great big silly bull-headed gudgeon. But he is flopping about in my net all the same."

"Where is this Count Sylvius?"

"I've been at his very elbow all the morning. You've seen me as an old lady,

Watson. I was never more convincing. He actually picked up my parasol for me once. 'By your leave, madame,' said he—half-Italian, you know, and with the Southern graces of manner when in the mood, but a devil incarnate in the other mood. Life is full of whimsical happenings, Watson."

"It might have been tragedy."

"Well, perhaps it might. I followed him to old Straubenzee's workshop in the Minories. Straubenzee made the air-gun—a very pretty bit of work, as I understand, and I rather fancy it is in the opposite window at the present moment. Have you seen the dummy? Of course, Billy showed it to you. Well, it may get a bullet through its beautiful head at any moment. Ah, Billy, what is it?"

The boy had re-appeared in the room with a card upon a tray. Holmes glanced at it with raised eyebrows and an amused smile.

"The man himself. I had hardly expected this. Grasp the nettle, Watson! A man of nerve. Possibly you have heard of his reputation as a shooter of big game. It would indeed be a triumphant ending to his excellent sporting record if he added me to his bag. This is a proof that he feels my toe very close behind his heel."

"Send for the police."

"I probably shall. But not just yet. Would you glance carefully out of the window, Watson, and see if anyone is hanging about in the street?"

Watson looked warily round the edge of the curtain.

"Yes, there is one rough fellow near the door."

"That will be Sam Merton—the faithful but rather fatuous Sam. Where is this gentleman, Billy?"

"In the waiting-room, sir."

"Show him up when I ring."

"Yes, sir."

"If I am not in the room, show him in all the same."

"Yes, sir."

Watson waited until the door was closed, and then he turned earnestly to his companion.

"Look here, Holmes, this is simply impossible. This is a desperate man, who sticks at nothing. He may have come to murder you."

"I should not be surprised."

"I insist upon staying with you."

"You would be horribly in the way."

"In *his* way?"

"No, my dear fellow—in my way."

"Well, I can't possibly leave you."

"Yes, you can, Watson. And you will, for you have never failed to play the game. I am sure you will play it to the end. This man has come for his own purpose, but he may stay for mine." Holmes took out his note-book and scribbled a few lines. "Take a cab to Scotland Yard and give this to Youghal of the C.I.D. Come back with the police. The fellow's arrest will follow."

"I'll do that with joy."

"Before you return I may have just time enough to find out where the stone is." He touched the bell. "I think we will go out through the bedroom. This second exit is exceedingly useful. I rather want to see my shark without his seeing me, and I have, as you will remember, my own way of doing it."

IT was, therefore, an empty room into which Billy, a minute later, ushered Count Sylvius. The famous game-shot, sportsman, and man-about-town was a big, swarthy fellow, with a formidable dark moustache, shading a cruel, thin-lipped mouth, and surmounted by a long, curved nose, like the beak of an eagle. He was well dressed, but his brilliant necktie, shining pin, and glittering rings were flamboyant in their effect. As the door closed behind him, he looked round him with fierce, startled eyes, like one who suspects a trap at every turn. Then he gave a violent start as he saw the impassive head and the collar of the dressing-gown which projected above the armchair in the window. At first his expression was one of pure amazement. Then the light of a horrible hope gleamed in his dark, murderous eyes. He took one more glance round to see that there were no witnesses, and then, on tip-toe, his thick stick half raised, he approached the silent figure. He was crouching for his final spring and blow when a cool, sardonic voice greeted him from the open bedroom door:—

"Don't break it, Count! Don't break it!"

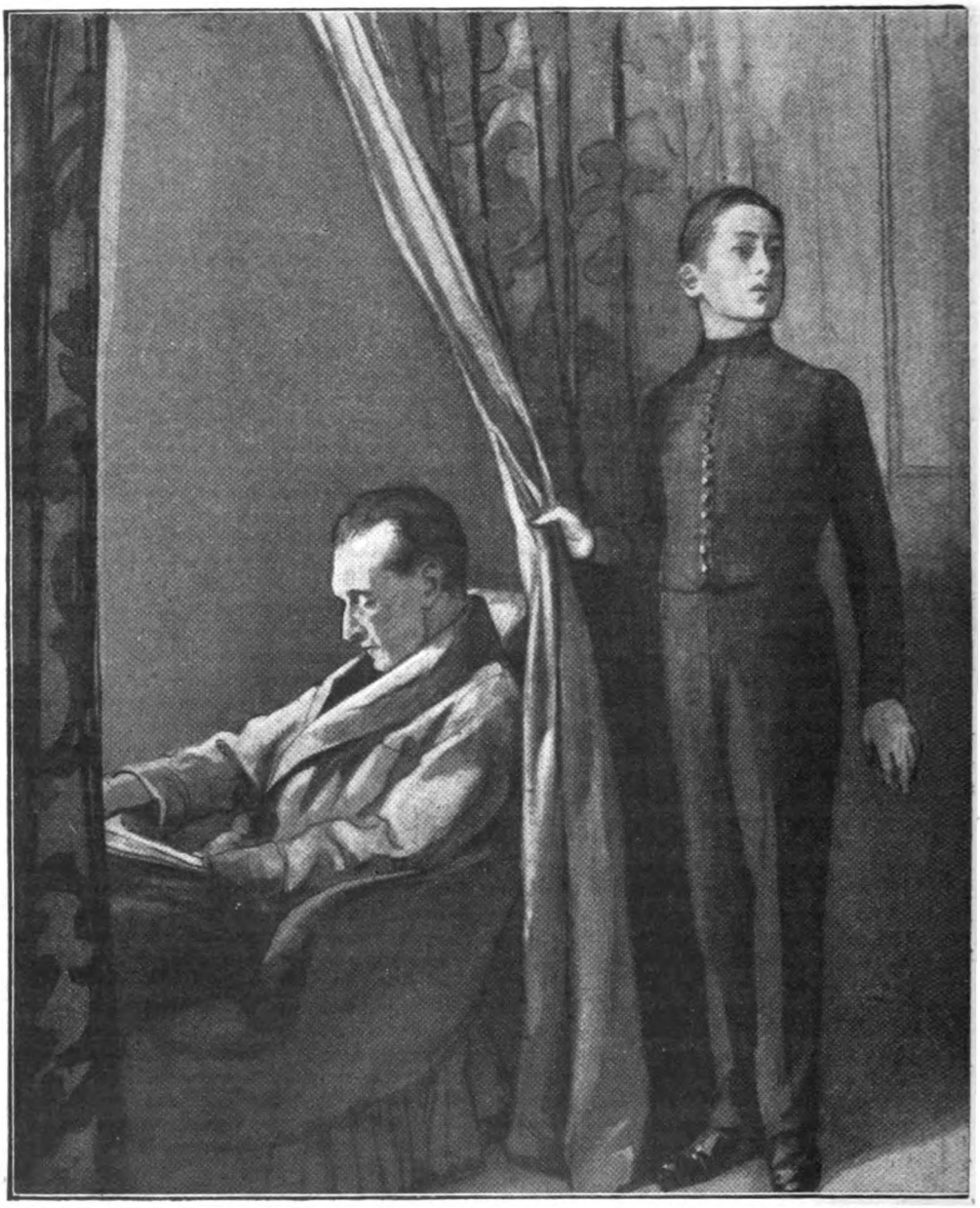
The assassin staggered back, amazement in his convulsed face. For an instant he half raised his loaded cane once more, as if he would turn his violence from the effigy to the original; but there was something in that steady grey eye and mocking smile which caused his hand to sink to his side.

"It's a pretty little thing," said Holmes, advancing towards the image. "Tavernier, the French modeller, made it. He is as good at waxworks as your friend Straubenzee is at air-guns."

"Air-guns, sir! What do you mean?"

"Put your hat and stick on the side table. Thank you! Pray take a seat. Would you care to put your revolver out also? Oh, very good, if you prefer to sit upon it. Your visit is really most opportune, for I wanted badly to have a few minutes' chat with you."

The Count scowled, with heavy, threatening eyebrows.



"Billy advanced and drew away the drapery which screened the window. Dr. Watson gown

"I, too, wished to have some words with you, Holmes. That is why I am here. I won't deny that I intended to assault you just now."

Holmes swung his leg on the edge of the table.

"I rather gathered that you had some idea of the sort in your head," said he. "But why these personal attentions?"

"Because you have gone out of your way to annoy me. Because you have put your creatures upon my track."

"My creatures! I assure you no!"

"Nonsense! I have had them followed. Two can play at that game, Holmes."

"It is a small point, Count Sylvius, but perhaps you would kindly give me my prefix when you address me. You can understand

could not restrain a cry of amazement. There was a facsimile of his old friend, dressing-and all."

that, with my routine of work, I should find myself on familiar terms with half the rogues' gallery, and you will agree that exceptions are invidious."

"Well, *Mr.* Holmes, then."

"Excellent! But I assure you you are mistaken about my alleged agents."

Count Sylvius laughed contemptuously.

"Other people can observe as well as you. Yesterday there was an old sporting man. To-day it was an elderly woman. They held me in view all day."

"Really, sir, you compliment me. Old Baron Dowson said the night before he was hanged that in my case what the law had gained the stage had lost. And now you give my little impersonations your kindly praise!"

"It was you—you yourself?"

Holmes shrugged his shoulders. "You can see in the corner the parasol which you so politely handed to me in the Minories before you began to suspect."

"If I had known, you might never——"

"Have seen this humble home again. I was well aware of it. We all have neglected opportunities to deplore. As it happens, you did not know, so here we are!"

The Count's knotted brows gathered more heavily over his menacing eyes. "What you say only makes the matter worse. It was not your agents, but your play-acting, busybody self! You admit that you have dogged me. Why?"

"Come now, Count. You used to shoot lions in Algeria."

"Well?"

"But why?"

"Why? The sport—the excitement—the danger!"

"And, no doubt, to free the country from a pest?"

"Exactly!"

"My reasons in a nutshell!"

The Count sprang to his feet, and his hand involuntarily moved back to his hip-pocket.

"Sit down, sir, sit down! There was another, more practical, reason. I want that yellow diamond!"

Count Sylvius lay back in his chair with an evil smile.

"Upon my word!" said he.

"You knew that I was after you for that. The real reason why you are here to-night is to find out how much I know about the matter and how far my removal is absolutely essential. Well, I should say that, from your point of view, it *is* absolutely essential, for I know all about it, save only one thing, which you are about to tell me."

"Oh, indeed! And, pray, what is this missing fact?"

"Where the Crown diamond now is."

The Count looked sharply at his companion. "Oh, you want to know that, do you? How the devil should I be able to tell you where it is?"

"You can, and you will."

"Indeed!"

"You can't bluff me, Count Sylvius." Holmes's eyes, as he gazed at him, contracted and lightened until they were like two menacing points of steel. "You are absolute plate-glass. I see to the very back of your mind."

"Then, of course, you see where the diamond is!"

Holmes clapped his hands with amusement, and then pointed a derisive finger. "Then you do know. You have admitted it!"

"I admit nothing."

"Now, Count, if you will be reasonable, we can do business. If not, you will get hurt."

Count Sylvius threw up his eyes to the ceiling. "And you talk about bluff!" said he.

HOLMES looked at him thoughtfully, like a master chess-player who meditates his crowning move. Then he threw open the table drawer and drew out a squat note-book.

"Do you know what I keep in this book?"

"No, sir, I do not!"

"You!"

"Me?"

"Yes, sir, *you!* You are all here—every action of your vile and dangerous life."

"Damn you, Holmes!" cried the Count, with blazing eyes. "There are limits to my patience!"

"It's all here, Count. The real facts as to the death of old Mrs. Harold, who left you the Blymer estate, which you so rapidly gambled away."

"You are dreaming!"

"And the complete life history of Miss Minnie Warrender."

"Tut! You will make nothing of that!"

"Plenty more here, Count. Here is the robbery in the train-de-luxe to the Riviera on February 13th, 1892. Here is the forged cheque in the same year on the Crédit Lyonnais."

"No; you're wrong there."

"Then I am right on the others! Now, Count, you are a card-player. When the other fellow has all the trumps, it saves time to throw down your hand."

"What has all this talk to do with the jewel of which you spoke?"

"Gently, Count. Restrain that eager mind! Let me get to the points in my own humdrum fashion. I have all this against you; but, above all, I have a clear case against both you and your fighting bully in the case of the Crown diamond."

"Indeed!"

"I have the cabman who took you to Whitehall and the cabman who brought you away. I have the Commissionaire who saw you near the case. I have Ikey Sanders, who refused to cut it up for you. Ikey has peached, and the game is up."

The veins stood out on the Count's forehead. His dark, hairy hands were clenched in a convulsion of restrained emotion. He tried to speak, but the words would not shape themselves.

"That's the hand I play from," said Holmes. "I put it all upon the table. But one card is missing. It's the King of Diamonds. I don't know where the stone is."

"You never shall know."

"No? Now, be reasonable, Count. Consider the situation. You are going to be locked up for twenty years. So is Sam Merton. What good are you going to get out of your diamond? None in the world. But if you hand it over—well, I'll compound a felony. We don't want you or Sam. We want the stone. Give that up, and so far as I am concerned you can go free so long as you behave yourself in the future. If you make another slip—well, it will be the last. But this time my commission is to get the stone, not you."

"But if I refuse?"

"Why, then—alas!—it must be you and not the stone."

Billy had appeared in answer to a ring.

"I think, Count, that it would be as well to have your friend Sam at this conference. After all, his interests should be represented. Billy, you will see a large and ugly gentleman outside the front door. Ask him to come up."

"If he won't come, sir?"

"No violence, Billy. Don't be rough with him. If you tell him that Count Sylvius wants him he will certainly come."

"What are you going to do now?" asked the Count, as Billy disappeared.

"My friend Watson was with me just now. I told him that I had a shark and a gudgeon in my net; now I am drawing the net and up they come together."

The Count had risen from his chair, and his hand was behind his back. Holmes held something half protruding from the pocket of his dressing-gown.

"You won't die in your bed, Holmes."

"I have often had the same idea. Does it matter very much? After all, Count, your own exit is more likely to be perpendicular than horizontal. But these anticipations of the future are morbid. Why not give ourselves up to the unrestrained enjoyment of the present?"

A sudden wild-beast light sprang up in the dark, menacing eyes of the master criminal. Holmes's figure seemed to grow taller as he grew tense and ready.

"It is no use your fingering your revolver, my friend," he said, in a quiet voice. "You know perfectly well that you dare not use it, even if I gave you time to draw it. Nasty, noisy things, revolvers, Count. Better stick to air-guns. Ah! I think I hear the fairy footstep of your estimable partner. Good day, Mr. Merton. Rather dull in the street, is it not?"

THE prize-fighter, a heavily built young man with a stupid, obstinate, slab-sided face, stood awkwardly at the door, looking about him with a puzzled expression. Holmes's debonair manner was a new experience, and though he vaguely felt that it was hostile, he did not know how to counter it. He turned to his more astute comrade for help.

"What's the game now, Count? What's this fellow want? What's up?" His voice was deep and raucous.

The Count shrugged his shoulders and it was Holmes who answered.

"If I may put it in a nutshell, Mr. Merton, I should say it was *all* up."

The boxer still addressed his remarks to his associate.

"Is this cove trying to be funny, or what? I'm not in the funny mood myself."

"No, I expect not," said Holmes. "I think I can promise you that you will feel even less humorous as the evening advances. Now, look here, Count Sylvius. I'm a busy man and I can't waste time. I'm going into that bedroom. Pray make yourselves quite at home in my absence. You can explain to your friend how the matter lies without the restraint of my presence. I shall try over the Hoffmann Barcarole upon my violin. In five minutes I shall return for your final answer. You quite grasp the alternative, do you not? Shall we take you, or shall we have the stone?"

Holmes withdrew, picking up his violin from the corner as he passed. A few moments later the long-drawn, wailing notes of that most haunting of tunes came faintly through the closed door of the bedroom.

"What is it, then?" asked Merton, anxiously, as his companion turned to him. "Does he know about the stone?"

"He knows a damned sight too much about it. I'm not sure that he doesn't know all about it."

"Good Lord!" The boxer's sallow face turned a shade whiter.

"Ikey Sanders has split on us."

"He has, has he? I'll do him down a thick 'un for that if I swing for it."

"That won't help us much. We've got to make up our minds what to do."

"Half a mo'," said the boxer, looking suspiciously at the bedroom door. "He's a leary cove that wants watching. I suppose he's not listening?"

"How can he be listening with that music going?"

"That's right. Maybe somebody's behind a curtain. Too many curtains in this room." As he looked round he suddenly saw for the first time the effigy in the window, and stood staring and pointing, too amazed for words.

"Tut! it's only a dummy," said the Count.

"A fake, is it? Well, strike me! Madame Tussaud ain't in it. It's the living spit of him, gown and all. But them curtains, Count!"

"Oh, confound the curtains! We are wasting our time, and there is none too much. He can lag us over this stone."

"The deuce he can!"

"But he'll let us slip if we only tell him where the swag is."

"What! Give it up? Give up a hundred thousand quid?"

"It's one or the other."

Merton scratched his short-cropped pate.

"He's alone in there. Let's do him in. If his light were out we should have nothing to fear."

The Count shook his head.

"He is armed and ready. If we shot him we could hardly get away in a place like this. Besides, it's likely enough that the police know whatever evidence he has got. Hallo! What was that?"

There was a vague sound which seemed to come from the window. Both men sprang round, but all was quiet. Save for the one strange figure seated in the chair, the room was certainly empty.

"Something in the street," said Merton. "Now look here, guv'nor, you've got the brains. Surely you can think a way out of it. If slugging is no use, then it's up to you."

"I've fooled better men than he," the Count answered. "The stone is here in my secret pocket. I take no chances leaving it about. It can be out of England to-night and cut into four pieces in Amsterdam before Sunday. He knows nothing of Van Seddar."

"I thought Van Seddar was going next week."

"He *was*. But now he must get off by the next boat. One or other of us must slip round with the stone to Lime Street and tell him."

"But the false bottom ain't ready."

"Well, he must take it as it is and chance it. There's not a moment to lose." Again, with the sense of danger which becomes an instinct with the sportsman, he paused and looked hard at the window. Yes, it was surely from the street that the faint sound had come.

"As to Holmes," he continued, "we can fool him easily enough. You see, the damned fool won't arrest us if he can get the stone. Well, we'll promise him the stone. We'll put him on the wrong track about it, and before he finds that it *is* the wrong track it will be in Holland and we out of the country."

"That sounds good to me!" cried Sam Merton, with a grin.

"You go on and tell the Dutchman to get a move on him. I'll see this sucker and fill him up with a bogus confession. I'll tell him that the stone is in Liverpool. Confound that whining music; it gets on my nerves! By the time he finds it isn't in Liverpool it will be in quarters and we on the blue water. Come back here, out of a line with that keyhole. Here is the stone."

"I wonder you dare carry it."

"Where could I have it safer? If we could take it out of Whitehall someone else could surely take it out of my lodgings."

"Let's have a look at it."

COUNT SYLVIUS cast a somewhat unflattering glance at his associate, and disregarded the unwashed hand which was extended towards him.

"What—d'ye think I'm going to snatch it off you? See here, mister, I'm getting a bit tired of your ways."

"Well, well; no offence, Sam. We can't afford to quarrel. Come over to the window if you want to see the beauty properly. Now hold it to the light! Here!"

"Thank you!"

With a single spring Holmes had leaped from the dummy's chair and had grasped the precious jewel. He held it now in one hand, while his other pointed a revolver at the Count's head. The two villains staggered back in utter amazement. Before they had recovered Holmes had pressed the electric bell.

"No violence, gentlemen—no violence, I beg of you! Consider the furniture! It must be very clear to you that your position is an impossible one. The police are waiting below."

The Count's bewilderment overmastered his rage and fear.

"But how the deuce——?" he gasped.

"Your surprise is very natural. You are not aware that a second door from my bedroom leads behind that curtain. I fancied that you must have heard me when I displaced the figure, but luck was on my side. It gave me a chance of listening to your racy conversation, which would have been painfully constrained had you been aware of my presence."

The Count gave a gesture of resignation.

"We give you best, Holmes. I believe you are the devil himself."

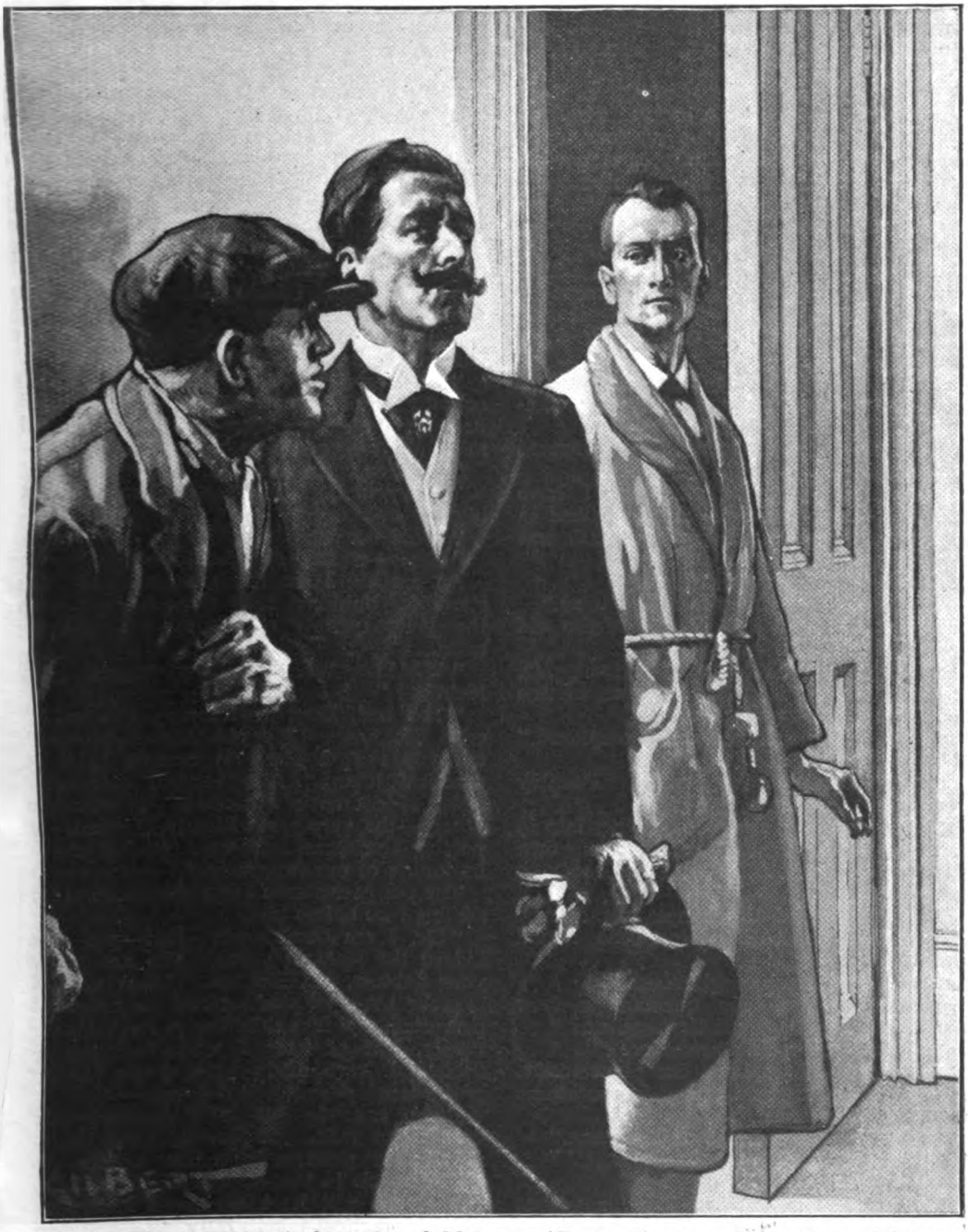
"Not far from him, at any rate," Holmes answered, with a polite smile.

Sam Merton's slow intellect had only gradually appreciated the situation. Now, as the sound of heavy steps came from the stairs outside, he broke silence at last.

"A fair cop!" said he. "But, I say, what about that bloomin' fiddle! I hear it yet."

"Tut, tut!" Holmes answered. "You are perfectly right. Let it play! These modern gramophones are a remarkable invention."

There was an inrush of police, the handcuffs clicked, and the criminals were led to



"'I'm going into that bedroom,' said Holmes. 'Pray make yourselves quite at home in my absence. In five minutes I shall return for your final answer.'"

the waiting cab. Watson lingered with Holmes, congratulating him upon this fresh leaf added to his laurels. Once more their conversation was interrupted by the imperturbable Billy with his card-tray.

"Lord Cantlemere, sir."

"Show him up, Billy. This is the eminent peer who represents the very highest interests," said Holmes. "He is an excellent and loyal person, but rather of the old *régime*.

Shall we make him unbend? Dare we venture upon a slight liberty? He knows, we may conjecture, nothing of what has occurred."

THE door opened to admit a thin, austere figure with a hatchet face and drooping mid-Victorian whiskers of a glossy blackness which hardly corresponded with the rounded shoulders and feeble gait. Holmes advanced affably, and shook an unresponsive hand.

"How do you do, Lord Cantlemere? It is chilly, for the time of year, but rather warm indoors. May I take your overcoat?"

"No, I thank you; I will not take it off."

Holmes laid his hand insistently upon the sleeve.

"Pray allow me! My friend Dr. Watson would assure you that these changes of temperature are most insidious."

His lordship shook himself free with some impatience.

"I am quite comfortable, sir. I have no need to stay. I have simply looked in to know how your self-appointed task was progressing."

"It is difficult—very difficult."

"I feared that you would find it so."

There was a distinct sneer in the old courtier's words and manner.

"Every man finds his limitations, Mr. Holmes, but at least it cures us of the weakness of self-satisfaction."

"Yes, sir, I have been much perplexed."

"No doubt."

"Especially upon one point. Possibly you could help me upon it?"

"You apply for my advice rather late in the day. I thought that you had your own all-sufficient methods. Still, I am ready to help you."

"You see, Lord Cantlemere, we can no doubt frame a case against the actual thieves."

"When you have caught them."

"Exactly. But the question is—how shall we proceed against the receiver?"

"Is this not rather premature?"

"It is as well to have our plans ready. Now, what would you regard as final evidence against the receiver?"

"The actual possession of the stone."

"You would arrest him upon that?"

"Most undoubtedly."

Holmes seldom laughed, but he got as near it as his old friend Watson could remember.

"In that case, my dear sir, I shall be under the painful necessity of advising your arrest."

Lord Cantlemere was very angry. Some of the ancient fires flickered up into his sallow cheeks.

"You take a great liberty, Mr. Holmes. In fifty years of official life I cannot recall such a case. I am a busy man, sir, engaged upon important affairs, and I have no time or taste for foolish jokes. I may tell you frankly, sir, that I have never been a believer in your powers, and that I have always been of the opinion that the matter was far safer in the hands of the regular police force. Your conduct confirms all my conclusions. I have the honour, sir, to wish you good evening."

Holmes had swiftly changed his position and was between the peer and the door.

"One moment, sir," said he. "To actually go off with the Mazarin stone would be a more serious offence than to be found in temporary possession of it."

"Sir, this is intolerable! Let me pass."

"Put your hand in the right-hand pocket of your overcoat."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Come—come; do what I ask."

An instant later the amazed peer was standing, blinking and stammering, with the great yellow stone on his shaking palm.

"What! What! How is this, Mr. Holmes?"

"Too bad, Lord Cantlemere, too bad!" cried Holmes. "My old friend here will tell you that I have an impish habit of practical joking. Also that I can never resist a dramatic situation. I took the liberty—the very great liberty, I admit—of putting the stone into your pocket at the beginning of our interview."

The old peer stared from the stone to the smiling face before him.

"Sir, I am bewildered. But—yes—it is indeed the Mazarin stone. We are greatly your debtors, Mr. Holmes. Your sense of humour may, as you admit, be somewhat perverted, and its exhibition remarkably untimely, but at least I withdraw any reflection I have made upon your amazing professional powers. But how——"

"The case is but half finished; the details can wait. No doubt, Lord Cantlemere, your pleasure in telling of this successful result in the exalted circle to which you return will be some small atonement for my practical joke. Billy, you will show his lordship out, and tell Mrs. Hudson that I should be glad if she would send up dinner for two as soon as possible."

NEXT MONTH:—

"The Bully of Brocas Court," by Sir A. CONAN DOYLE.

One of the Most Extraordinary Boxing Stories Ever Written.

THE UNEXPECTED CLICKING OF CUTHBERT

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY
WILMOT LUNT

THE young man flung his bag of clubs with a clatter on the floor of the smoking-room and sank moodily into an arm-chair. He pressed the bell.

"Waiter!"

"Sir?"

"You may have these clubs. Take them away. If you don't want them yourself, give them to one of the caddies."

Across the room the Oldest Member eyed him with a grave sadness through the smoke of his pipe. He was not unprepared for this attitude on the part of his young friend. From his eyrie on the terrace above the ninth green he had observed him start out on the afternoon's round, and had seen him drop a couple of balls in the lake after doing the first hole in seven.

"You are giving up golf?" he said.

"Yes!" cried the young man, fiercely. "For ever, dammit! Footling game! Blanked infernal fat-headed silly ass of a game! Nothing but a waste of time."

The Sage winced.

"Don't say that, my boy."

"But I do say it. What good is golf? Life is stern and life is earnest. We live in a practical age. All round us we see foreign competition making itself unpleasant. Is golf any *use?* Can you name me a single case where devotion to this pestilential pastime has done a man any practical good?"

The Sage smiled gently.

"I could name a thousand."

"One will do."

"I will select," said the Sage, "from the innumerable memories that rush to my mind, the story of J. Cuthbert Banks."

"Never heard of him."

"Be of good cheer," said the Oldest Member. "You are going to hear of him now."

IT was in the picturesque little settlement of Wood Hills (said the Oldest Member) that the incidents occurred which I am about to relate. Even if you have never been in Wood Hills, that suburban paradise is probably familiar to you by name. Situated at a convenient distance from the City, it combines in a notable manner the advantages of town life with the pleasant surroundings and healthful air of the country. Its inhabitants live in commodious houses, standing in their own grounds, and enjoy so many luxuries—such as gravel soil, main drainage, electric light, telephone, baths (h. and c.), and company's own water, that you might be pardoned for imagining life to be so ideal for them that no possible improvement could be added to their lot. Mrs. Willoughby Smethurst was under no such delusion. What Wood Hills needed to make it perfect, she realized, was Culture. Material comforts are all very well, but, if the *summum bonum* is to be achieved, the Soul also demands a look in, and it was Mrs. Smethurst's unfaltering resolve that never while she had her strength should the Soul be handed the loser's end. It was her intention to make Wood Hills a centre of all that was most cultivated and refined, and, golly! how she had succeeded. Under her presidency the

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Wood Hills Literary and Debating Society had tripled its membership.

But there is always a fly in the ointment, a caterpillar in the salad. The local golf club, an institution to which Mrs. Smethurst strongly objected, had also tripled its membership; and the division of the community into two rival camps, the Golfers and the Cultured, had become more marked than ever. This division, always acute, had attained now to the dimensions of a Schism. The rival sects treated one another with a cold hostility. Unfortunate episodes came to widen the breach. Mrs. Smethurst's house adjoined the links, standing to the right of the fourth tee; and, as the Literary Society was in the habit of entertaining visiting lecturers, many a golfer had foozled his drive owing to sudden loud outbursts of applause coinciding with his down-swing. And not long before this story opens a sliced ball, whizzing in at the open window, had come within an ace of incapacitating Raymond Parsloe Devine, the rising young novelist (who rose at that moment a clear foot and a half), from any further exercise of his art. Two inches, indeed, to the right and Raymond must inevitably have handed in his dinner-pail.

To make matters worse, a ring at the front-door bell followed almost immediately, and the maid ushered in a young man of pleasing appearance in a sweater and baggy knicker-bockers, who apologetically but firmly insisted on playing his ball where it lay, and, what with the shock on the lecturer's narrow escape and the spectacle of the intruder standing on the table and working away with a niblick, the afternoon's session had to be classed as a complete frost. Mr. Devine's determination, from which no argument could swerve him, to deliver the rest of his lecture in the coal-cellar gave the meeting a jolt from which it never recovered.

I have dwelt upon this incident, because it was the means of introducing Cuthbert Banks to Mrs. Smethurst's niece, Adeline. As Cuthbert, for it was he who had so nearly reduced the muster-roll of rising novelists by one, hopped down from the table after his stroke, he was suddenly aware that a beautiful girl was looking at him intently. As a matter of fact, everyone in the room was looking at him intently, none more so than Raymond Parsloe Devine, but none of the others were beautiful girls. Long as the members of Wood Hills Literary Society were on brain, they were short on looks, and, to Cuthbert's excited eye, Adeline Smethurst stood out like a jewel in a pile of coke.

He had never seen her before, for she had only arrived at her aunt's house on the previous day, but he was perfectly certain that life, even when lived in the midst of gravel soil, main drainage, and company's own water, was going to be a pretty poor affair if he did not see her again. Yes, Cuthbert was in love: and it is interesting to record, as showing the effect of the tender emotion on a man's game, that twenty minutes after he had met Adeline he did the short eleventh in one, and as near as a toucher got a three on the four-hundred-yard twelfth.

I WILL skip lightly over the intermediate stages of Cuthbert's courtship and come to the moment when—at the annual ball in aid of the local Cottage Hospital, the only occasion during the year on which the lion, so to speak, lay down with the lamb, and the Golfers and the Cultured met on terms of easy comradeship, their differences temporarily laid aside—he proposed to Adeline and was badly stymied.

That fair, soulful girl could not see him with a spy-glass.

"Mr. Banks," she said, "I will speak frankly."

"Charge right ahead," assented Cuthbert.

"Deeply sensible as I am of——"

"I know. Of the honour and the compliment and all that. But, passing lightly over all that—er—guff, what seems to be the trouble? I love you to distraction——"

"Love is not everything."

"You're wrong," said Cuthbert, earnestly. "You're right off it. Love——" And he was about to dilate on the theme when she interrupted him.

"I am a girl of ambition."

"And very nice, too," said Cuthbert.

"I am a girl of ambition," repeated Adeline, "and I realize that the fulfilment of my ambitions must come through my husband. I am very ordinary myself——"

"What!" cried Cuthbert. "You ordinary? Why, you are a pearl among women, the queen of your sex. You can't have been looking in a glass lately. You stand alone. Simply alone. You make the rest look like battered repaints."

"Well," said Adeline, softening a trifle, "I believe I am fairly good-looking——"

"Anybody who was content to call you fairly good-looking would describe the Taj Mahal as a pretty nifty tomb."

"But that is not the point. What I mean is, if I marry a nonentity I shall be a nonentity myself for ever. And I would sooner die than be a nonentity."

"And, if I follow your reasoning, you think that that lets *me* out?"

"Well, really, Mr. Banks, *have* you done anything, or are you likely ever to do anything worth while?"

Cuthbert hesitated.

"It's true," he said, "I didn't finish in the

"A young man of pleasing appearance apologetically but firmly insisted on playing his ball where it lay."

first ten in the Open, and I was knocked out in the semi-final of the Amateur, but I won the French Open last year."

"The—what?"

"The French Open Championship. Golf, you know."

"Golf! You waste all your time playing golf."

"Waste!" faltered Cuthbert.

"I admire a man who is more spiritual, more intellectual." A pang of jealousy rent Cuthbert's bosom.

"Like What's-his-name Devine?" he said, sullenly.

"Mr. Devine," replied Adeline, blushing faintly, "is going to be a great man. Already he has achieved much. The critics say that he is more Russian than any other young English writer."

"And is that good?"

"Of course it's good."

"I should have thought the wheeze would be to be more English than any other young English writer."

"Nonsense! Who wants an English writer to be English? You've got to be Russian or Spanish or something to be a real success. The mantle of the great Russians has descended on Mr. Devine."

"From what I've heard of Russians, I should hate to have that happen to *me*."

"There is no danger of that," said Adeline, scornfully.

"Oh! Well, let me tell you that there is a lot more in me than you think."

"That might easily be so."

"You think I'm not spiritual and intellectual," said Cuthbert, deeply moved. "Very well. To-morrow I join the Literary Society."

Even as he spoke the words his leg was itching to kick himself for being such a chump, but the sudden expression of pleasure on Adeline's face soothed him; and he went home that night with the feeling that he had taken on something rather attractive. It was only in the cold, grey light of the morning that he realized what he had let himself in for.

I DO not know if you have had any experience of suburban literary societies, but the one that flourished under the eye of Mrs. Willoughby Smethurst at Wood Hills was rather more so than the average. With my feeble powers of narrative, I cannot hope to make clear to you all that Cuthbert Banks endured in the next few weeks. And, even if I could, I doubt if I should do so. It is all very well to excite pity and terror, as Aristotle recommends, but there are limits. In the ancient Greek tragedies it was an ironclad rule that all the real rough stuff should take place off-stage, and I shall follow this admirable principle. It will suffice if I say merely that J. Cuthbert Banks had a thin time. After attending eleven debates and fourteen lectures on *vers libre* Poetry, the Seventeenth-Century Essayists, the Neo-Scandinavian Movement in Portuguese Literature, and other subjects of a similar nature, he grew so enfeebled that, on the rare occasions when he had time for a visit to the links, he had to take a full iron for his mashie-shots.

It was not simply the oppressive nature of the debates and lectures that sapped his vitality. What really got right in amongst him was the torture of seeing Adeline's adoration of Raymond Parsloe Devine. The man seemed to have made the deepest possible impression upon her plastic emotions. When he spoke, she leaned forward with parted lips and looked at him. When he was not speaking—which was seldom—she leaned back and looked at him. And when he happened to take the next seat to her, she leaned sideways and looked at him. One glance at Mr. Devine would have been more than enough for Cuthbert; but Adeline found him a spectacle that never palled. She could not have gazed at him with a more rapturous intensity if she had been a small child and he a saucer of ice-cream. All this Cuthbert had to witness while still endeavouring to retain the possession of his faculties sufficiently to enable him to duck and back away if somebody suddenly asked him what he thought of the sombre realism of Vladimir Brusiloff. It is little wonder that he tossed in bed, picking at the coverlet, through sleepless nights, and had to have all his waistcoats taken in three inches to keep them from sagging.

This Vladimir Brusiloff to whom I have referred was the famous Russian novelist, and, owing to the fact of his being in the country on a lecturing tour at the moment, there had been something of a boom in his works. The Wood Hills Literary Society had been studying them for weeks, and never since his first entrance into intellectual circles had Cuthbert Banks come nearer to throwing in the towel. Vladimir specialized in grey studies of hopeless misery, where nothing happened till page three hundred and eighty, when the moujik decided to commit suicide. It was tough going for a man whose deepest reading hitherto had been Varden on the Push-Shot, and there can be no greater proof of the magic of love than the fact that Cuthbert stuck it without a cry. But the strain was terrible, and I am inclined to think that he must have cracked, had it not been for the daily reports in the papers of the internecine strife which was proceeding so briskly in Russia. Cuthbert was an optimist at heart, and it seemed to him that, at the rate at which the inhabitants

of that interesting country were murdering one another, the supply of Russian novelists must eventually give out.

One morning, as he tottered down the road for the short walk which was now almost the only exercise to which he was equal, Cuthbert met Adeline. A spasm of anguish flitted through all his nerve-centres as he saw that she was accompanied by Raymond Parsloe Devine.

"Good morning, Mr. Banks," said Adeline.

"Good morning," said Cuthbert, hollowly.

"Such good news about Vladimir Brusiloff."

"Dead?" said Cuthbert, with a touch of hope.

"Dead? Of course not. Why should he be? No, Aunt Emily met his manager after his lecture at Queen's Hall yesterday, and he has promised that Mr. Brusiloff shall come to her next Wednesday reception."

"Oh, ah?" said Cuthbert, dully.

"I don't know how she managed it. I think she must have told him that Mr. Devine would be there to meet him."

"But you said he was coming," argued Cuthbert.

"I shall be very glad," said Raymond Devine, "of the opportunity of meeting Brusiloff."

"I'm sure," said Adeline, "he will be very glad of the opportunity of meeting you."

"Possibly," said Mr. Devine. "Possibly. Competent critics have said that my work closely resembles that of the great Russian Masters."

"Your psychology is so deep."

"Yes, yes."

"And your atmosphere."

"Quite."

Cuthbert, in a perfect agony of spirit, prepared to withdraw from this love-feast. The sun was shining brightly, but the world was black to him. Birds sang in the tree-tops, but he did not hear them. He might have been a moujik for all the pleasure he found in life.

"You will be there, Mr. Banks?" said Adeline, as he turned away.

"Oh, all right," said Cuthbert.

WHEN Cuthbert had entered the drawing-room on the following Wednesday and had taken his usual place in a distant corner, where, while able to feast his gaze on Adeline, he had a sporting chance of being overlooked or mistaken for a piece of furniture, he perceived the great Russian thinker seated in the midst of a circle of admiring females. Raymond Parsloe Devine had not yet arrived.

His first glance at the novelist surprised Cuthbert. Doubtless with the best motives, Vladimir Brusiloff had permitted his face to become almost entirely concealed behind a dense zareba of hair, but his eyes were visible through the undergrowth, and it seemed to Cuthbert that there was an expression in them not unlike that of a cat in a strange back-yard surrounded by small boys. The man looked forlorn and hopeless, and Cuthbert wondered whether he had had bad news from home.

This was not the case. The latest news which Vladimir Brusiloff had had from Russia had been particularly cheering. Three of his principal creditors had perished in the last massacre of the *bourgeoisie*, and a man whom he had owed for five years for a samovar and a pair of overshoes had fled the country, and had not been heard of since. It was not bad news from home that was depressing Vladimir. What was wrong with him was the fact that this was the eighty-second suburban literary reception he had been compelled to attend since he had landed in the country on his lecturing-tour, and he was sick to death of it. When his agent had first suggested the trip, he had signed on the dotted line without an instant's hesitation. Worked out in roubles, the fees offered had seemed just about right. But now, as he peered through the brushwood at the faces round him, and realized that eight out of ten of those present had manuscripts of some sort concealed on their persons, and were only waiting for an opportunity to whip them out and start reading, he wished that he had stayed at his quiet home in Nijni-Novgorod, where the worst thing that could happen to a fellow was a brace of bombs coming in through the window and mixing themselves up with his breakfast egg.

At this point in his meditations he was aware that his hostess was looming up before him with a pale young man in horn-rimmed spectacles at her side. There was in Mrs. Smethurst's demeanour something of the unction of the master-of-ceremonies at the big fight who introduces the earnest gentleman who wishes to challenge the winner.

"Oh, Mr. Brusiloff," said Mrs. Smethurst, "I do so want you to meet Mr. Raymond Parsloe Devine, whose work I expect you know. He is one of our younger novelists."

The distinguished visitor peered in a wary and defensive manner through the shrubbery, but did not speak. Inwardly he was thinking how exactly like Mr. Devine was to the eighty-one other younger novelists to whom he had been introduced at various hamlets throughout the country. Raymond Parsloe Devine bowed courteously, while Cuthbert, wedged into his corner, glowered at him.

'The critics," said Mr. Devine, 'have

been kind enough to say that my poor efforts contain a good deal of the Russian spirit. I owe much to the great Russians. I have been greatly influenced by Sovietski."

Down in the forest something stirred. It was Vladimir Brusiloff's mouth opening, as he prepared to speak. He was not a man who prattled readily, especially in a foreign tongue. He gave the impression that each word was excavated from his interior by some up-to-date process of mining. He glared bleakly at Mr. Devine, and allowed three words to drop out of him.

"Sovietski no good!"

He paused for a moment, set the machinery working again, and delivered five more at the pit-head.

"I spit me of Sovietski!"

THERE was a painful sensation. The lot of a popular idol is in many ways an enviable one, but it has the drawback of uncertainty. Here to-day and gone to-morrow. Until this moment Raymond Parsloe Devine's stock had stood at something considerably over par in Wood Hills intellectual circles, but now there was a rapid slump. Hitherto he had been greatly admired for being influenced by Sovietski, but it appeared now that this was not a good thing to be. It was evidently a rotten thing to be. The law could not touch you for being influenced by Sovietski, but there is an ethical as well as a legal code, and this it was obvious that Raymond Parsloe Devine had transgressed. Women drew away from him slightly, holding their skirts. Men looked at him censoriously. Adeline Smethurst started violently, and dropped a teacup. And Cuthbert Banks, doing his popular imitation of a sardine in his corner, felt for the first time that life held something of sunshine.

Raymond Parsloe Devine was plainly shaken, but he made an adroit attempt to recover his lost prestige.

"When I say I have been influenced by Sovietski, I mean, of course, that I was once under his spell. A young writer commits many follies. I have long since passed through that phase. The false glamour of Sovietski has ceased to dazzle me. I now belong whole-heartedly to the school of Nastikoff."

There was a reaction. People nodded at one another sympathetically. After all, we cannot expect old heads on young shoulders, and a lapse at the outset of one's career should not be held against one who has eventually seen the light.

"Nastikoff no good," said Vladimir Brusiloff, coldly. He paused, listening to the machinery.

"Nastikoff worse than Sovietski."

He paused again.

"I spit me of Nastikoff!" he said.

This time there was no doubt about it. The bottom had dropped out of the market, and Raymond Parsloe Devine Preferred were down in the cellar with no takers. It was clear to the entire assembled company that they had been all wrong about Raymond Parsloe Devine. They had allowed him to play on their innocence and sell them a pup. They had taken him at his own valuation, and had been cheated into admiring him as a man who amounted to something, and all the while he had belonged to the school of Nastikoff. You never can tell. Mrs. Smethurst's guests were well-bred, and there was consequently no violent demonstration, but you could see by their faces what they felt. Those nearest Raymond Parsloe jostled to get farther away. Mrs. Smethurst eyed him stonily through a raised lorgnette. One or two low hisses were heard, and over at the other end of the room somebody opened the window in a marked manner.

Raymond Parsloe Devine hesitated for a moment, then, realizing his situation, turned and slunk to the door. There was an audible sigh of relief as it closed behind him.

Vladimir Brusiloff proceeded to sum up.

"No novelists any good except me. Sovietski—yah! Nastikoff—bah! I spit me of zem all. No novelists anywhere any good except me. P. G. Wodehouse and Tolstoi not bad. Not good, but not bad. No novelists any good except me."

And, having uttered this dictum, the human volcano removed a slab of cake from a near-by plate, steered it through the jungle, and began to champ.

It is too much to say that there was a dead silence. There could never be that in any room in which Vladimir Brusiloff was eating cake. But certainly what you might call the general chat-chat was pretty well down and out. Nobody liked to be the first to speak. The members of the Wood Hills Literary Society looked at one another timidly. Cuthbert, for his part, gazed at Adeline; and Adeline gazed into space. It was plain that the girl was deeply stirred. Her eyes were opened wide, a faint flush crimsoned her cheeks, and her breath was coming quickly.

Adeline's mind was in a whirl. She felt as if she had been walking gaily along a pleasant path and had stopped suddenly on the very brink of a precipice. It would be idle to deny that Raymond Parsloe Devine had attracted her extraordinarily. She had taken him at his own valuation as an extremely hot potato, and her hero-worship had gradually been turning into love. And now her hero had been shown to have feet of clay. It was hard, I consider, on Raymond

"The effervescent Muscovite stood for a moment eyeing him excitedly, then kissed him on both cheeks."

Parsloe Devine, but that is how it goes in this world. You get a following as a celebrity, and then you run up against another bigger celebrity and your admirers desert you. One could moralize on this at considerable length, but better not, perhaps. Enough to say that the glamour of Raymond Devine ceased abruptly in that moment for Adeline, and her most coherent thought at this juncture was the resolve, as soon as she got up to her room, to burn the three signed photographs he had sent her and to give the autographed presentation set of his books to the grocer's boy.

Mrs. Smethurst, meanwhile, having rallied somewhat, was endeavouring to set the feast of reason and flow of soul going again.

"And how do you like England, Mr. Brusiloff?" she asked.

The celebrity paused in the act of lowering another segment of cake.

"Dam good," he replied, cordially.

" I suppose you have travelled all over the country by this time ? "

" You said it," agreed the Thinker.

" Have you met many of our great public men ? "

" Yais—yais—quite a few of the nibs—Lloyid Gorge, I met him. But——" Beneath the matting a discontented expression came into his face, and his voice took on a peevish note. " But I not meet your *real* great men—your Arbmishel, your Arreevadon—I not meet them. That's what gives me the pipovitch. Have *you* ever met Arbmishel and Arreevadon ? "

A strained, anguished look came into Mrs. Smethurst's face and was reflected in the faces of the other members of the circle. The eminent Russian had sprung two entirely new ones on them, and they felt that their ignorance was about to be exposed. What would Vladimir Brusiloff think of the Wood Hills Literary Society ? The reputation of the Wood Hills Literary Society was at stake, trembling in the balance, and coming up for the third time. In dumb agony Mrs. Smethurst rolled her eyes about the room searching for someone capable of coming to the rescue. She drew blank.

AND then, from a distant corner, there sounded a deprecating cough, and those nearest Cuthbert Banks saw that he had stopped twisting his right foot round his left ankle and his left foot round his right ankle and was sitting up with a light almost of human intelligence in his eyes.

" Er——" said Cuthbert, blushing as every eye in the room seemed to fix itself on him, " I think he means Abe Mitchell and Harry Vardon."

" Abe Mitchell and Harry Vardon ? " repeated Mrs. Smethurst, blankly. " I never heard of——"

" Yais ! Yais ! Most ! Very ! " shouted Vladimir Brusiloff, enthusiastically. " Arbmishel and Arreevadon. You know them, yes ? "

" I've played with Abe Mitchell often, and I was partnered with Harry Vardon in last year's Open."

The great Russian uttered a cry that shook the chandelier.

" You play in ze Open ? Why," he demanded reproachfully of Mrs. Smethurst, " was I not been introducted to this young man who play in Opens ? "

" Well, really," faltered Mrs. Smethurst. " Well, the fact is, Mr. Brusiloff——"

She broke off. She was unequal to the task of explaining, without hurting anyone's feeling, that she had always regarded Cuthbert as a piece of cheese and a blot on the landscape.

" Introduct me ! " thundered the Celebrity.

" Why, certainly, certainly, of course. This is Mr. —— " She looked appealingly at Cuthbert.

" Banks," prompted Cuthbert.

" Banks ! " cried Vladimir Brusiloff. " Not Cootaboot Banks ? "

" *Is* your name Cootaboot ? " asked Mrs. Smethurst, faintly.

" Well, it's Cuthbert."

" Yais ! Yais ! Cootaboot ! " There was a rush and swirl, as the effervescent Muscovite burst his way through the throng and rushed to where Cuthbert sat. He stood for a moment eyeing him excitedly, then, stooping swiftly, kissed him on both cheeks before Cuthbert could get his guard up. " My dear young man, I saw you win ze French Open. Great ! Great ! Grand ! Superb ! Hot stuff, and you can say I said so ! Will you permit one who is but eighteen at Nijni-Novgorod to salute you once more ? "

And he kissed Cuthbert again. Then, brushing aside one or two intellectuals who were in the way, he dragged up a chair and sat down.

" You are a great man ! " he said.

" Oh, no," said Cuthbert modestly.

" Yais ! Great. Most ! Very ! The way you lay your approach-putts dead from anywhere ! "

" Oh, I don't know."

Mr. Brusiloff drew his chair closer.

" Let me tell you one vairy funny story about putting. It was one day I play at Nijni-Novgorod with the pro. against Lenin and Trotsky, and Trotsky had a two-inch putt for the hole. But, just as he addresses the ball, someone in the crowd he tries to assassinate Lenin with a rewolwer—you know that is our great national sport, trying to assassinate Lenin with rewolwers—and the bang puts Trotsky off his stroke and he goes five yards past the hole, and then Lenin, who is rather shaken, you understand, he misses again himself, and we win the hole and match and I clean up three hundred and ninety-six thousand roubles, or two pound ten shillings in your money. Some gameovitch ! And now let me tell you one other vairy funny story——"

Desultory conversation had begun in murmurs over the rest of the room, as the Wood Hills intellectuals politely endeavoured to conceal the fact that they realized that they were about as much out of it at this re-union of twin souls as cats at a dog-show. From time to time they started as Vladimir Brusiloff's laugh boomed out. Perhaps it was a consolation to them to know that he was enjoying himself.

As for Adeline, how shall I describe her emotions ? She was stunned. Before her

very eyes the stone which the builders had rejected had become the main thing, the hundred-to-one shot had walked away with the race. A rush of tender admiration for Cuthbert Banks flooded her heart. She saw that she had been all wrong. Cuthbert, whom she had always treated with a patronizing superiority, was really a man to be looked up to and worshipped. A deep, dreamy sigh shook Adeline's fragile form.

Half an hour later Vladimir and Cuthbert Banks rose.

'Goot-a-bye, Mrs. Smet-thirst," said the Celebrity. "Zank you for a most charming visit. My friend Cootaboot and me, we go now to shoot a few holes. You will lend me clobs, friend Cootaboot?"

"Any you want."

"The niblicksky is what I use most. Goot-a-bye, Mrs. Smet-thirst."

They were moving to the door, when Cuthbert felt a light touch on his arm. Adeline was looking up at him tenderly.

'May I come, too, and walk round with you?"

Cuthbert's bosom heaved.

"Oh," he said, with a tremor in his voice, "that you would walk round with me for life!"

Her eyes met his.

"Perhaps," she whispered, softly, "it could be arranged."

'AND so" (concluded the Oldest Member), "you see that golf can be of the greatest practical assistance to a man in Life's struggle. Raymond Parsloe Devine, who was no player, had to move out of the neighbourhood immediately, and is now, I believe, writing scenarios out in California for the Flicker Film Company. Adeline is married to Cuthbert, and it was only his earnest pleading which prevented her from having their eldest son christened Abe Mitchell Ribbed-Faced Mashie Banks, for she is now as keen a devotee of the great game as her husband. Those who know them say that theirs is a union so devoted, so——"

The Sage broke off abruptly, for the young man had rushed to the door and out into the passage. Through the open door he could hear him crying passionately to the waiter to bring back his clubs.

"One day I play at Nijni-Novgorod with the pro. against Lenin and Trotsky; and someone in the crowd he tries to assassinate Lenin.'

HERE ARE SOME OF THE CLEVER TRICKS BY WHICH ACTORS AND MANAGERS MAKE YOU SEE WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO SEE.

THE NEXT TIME YOU GO TO A THEATRE—WATCH!

by

Jane Cowl

ILLUSTRATED BY
TOM PEDDIE

IF I were to ask you if you understand "the tricks of the stage," I know what you would think of. You would recall the "paper snowstorms," the lightning and thunder, the "cloppity-clop" which is supposed to sound, and really does sound, like the hoof-beats of a galloping horse.

"Oh, pshaw!" you would say to me. "That's old stuff. I know how they do all that sort of thing."

Yes, but if you think those are the only tricks of the stage, you are very much mistaken. There are things going on across the footlights which you perhaps do not even notice. If you see them at all, you do not dream that they are done with a definite purpose; that the person responsible for them has studied the psychology of an audience so closely that he knows just how to play on its emotions to get the effect he wants.

Sometimes it is the producer of a play who makes use of this knowledge. Sometimes it is an actor who employs it for his own selfish ends. Human nature everywhere likes applause; likes to be the centre of interest. On the stage, this desire to get all the attention for oneself is stronger than anywhere else. And this desire is behind some of those "tricks" which you in the audience do not recognize, but which hace their effect on you just the same.

For instance, suppose an audience is watching a court-room scene, the "big scene" of a play. The spectators are keyed up with excitement, thrilling to the sharp, staccato questions of the prosecuting counsel and to the answers of the beautiful girl on trial.

The attention of the spectators is riveted on these two—as it should be. For the time being, no one else on the stage should count, except as a part of the frame in which these two are set. It is *their* scene. They have a right to monopolize the interest. Until this particular night they *have* monopolized it. It has been a big hit for them.

This time the scene starts all right, and, for a while, goes on as usual, the audience absorbed in the two central figures—the counsel and the girl. Then, suddenly, one of the other actors, seated at the table, begins to move to and fro a silver pencil which he is holding in his right hand. That seems a natural thing, doesn't it? A very trivial thing, too. Anybody might do it unconsciously. There can't be any intention in a silly little thing like that.

But there *is* intention. As that silver pencil is moved, the light is reflected from it in little flashing gleams which, in the half-gloom of the court-room, attract the notice of the audience. The gloom itself was deliberately planned so as to centre the interest on the two chief actors. The flashing of the pencil distracts the audience. Its attention wavers, the whole effect is marred. The big moment is only half successful. And all because one jealous

actor, by a simple little trick, has tried to rob two others of the big moment which he begrudged them.

Illusion in the theatre is not a thing of a moment. It must be built up, line by line, situation by situation, if the audience is to be put in the mood where tears or laughter will come easily. It is not a hit-or-miss affair. Devices which have been tried and found acceptable are introduced again and again, sometimes with variations.

Emotional results are produced from certain different causes. These may be roughly divided under the heads of colour, light, music, contrast, and vocal effect.

Many plays have "plants" in their early acts that pass almost unnoticed at the time, but that foreshadow later important incidents. By these "plants" the minds of the audience are subtly groomed so that the later events may appear natural and plausible.

"Suddenly, one of the other actors begins to move to and fro a silver pencil. The flashing of the pencil distracts the audience. Its attention wavers, the whole effect of the scene is marred."

An excellent illustration of this was provided in Bayard Veiller's highly successful melodrama, "Within the Law." The shop-girl, Mary Turner, convicted of a crime of which she was innocent, is brought into association with a real crook, Joe Garson. Garson plans to rob the Gilders. The scene is the library at night, and Gilder is on the stage with the police inspector and several plain-clothes men. They discuss the best means for catching the crooks red-handed. During their discussion, a flash of white light comes in through the window.

"What's that?" asks the inspector.

"That's the flash-light from the Metropolitan Tower," says Gilder.

A little later the spy in the pay of the police, who has betrayed the plot, is killed in this same room by Joe Garson. The discovery of the murder by the police is made possible when the light from the Tower penetrates the gloom and brings the body into sharp relief.

Another device in this same play which illustrates the value of a "plant" involves a Maxim silencer used by Joe Garson. In an earlier scene he shows the silencer, and explains that by its use on his revolver he will be able to shoot a man and there will be no noise from the shot. In order to prove his assertion he attaches the silencer to the revolver, points to a vase on a table at the other side of the room, pulls the trigger, and the vase is shattered. A secret spring operated by a stage hand has effected the destruction; but to the audience it seems that the damage has been wrought by the bullet from Garson's revolver. When, in the later scene, the police-spy falls dead after the discharge of the pistol from which no report is heard, it probably would have seemed a ludicrous incident to the spectators without the fresh memory of the shattered vase.

So far as I know, the use of the silencer in this play was absolutely new to the stage. But the apparent destruction of property by a non-existent bullet has been employed before. In "The House of a Thousand Candles," for instance, a shot directed at a plate on a shelf not only destroyed the plate but revealed a secret panel behind which reposed the will and papers the search for which was part of the mystery of the play.

Speaking of mysteries, "The Unknown Purple" contains some fine tricks of the kind with which audiences love to be bewildered. The purple ray in this play is supposed to make a man invisible. You see this ray pass across the stage, hover on the door of a safe, apparently turn the combination, and open the door. Whereupon, some "important papers," as if by magic, fly out of the safe. As the ray passes across the stage, a heavy chair is brushed aside as though the man himself had actually pushed against it. It is all very spooky, and the delighted crowds do not stop to think about the spotlight man in the flies, the secret spring in the safe, the hidden string attached to the chair and the man attached to that, who are the *dei ex machina* behind the mystery. Of course, the supposed relationship of the man himself

and the ray of light have been " planted " in the minds of the audience long before these incidents develop.

Modern tricks are more ingenious than such simple devices as the old-time collapsible canvas railroad train, which rushed across the stage at the climax of an act, bringing down the curtain to tumultuous applause. Here, by skilful lighting effects, the audience were prevented from knowing that they were seeing merely the profile of an engine attached to a long streamer of canvas painted to represent a railroad train and folded up in the wings like a concertina. As the profile engine was pulled quickly across the stage, by ropes, the entire length of the train was unfolded rapidly to view.

The effect of different colour schemes is highly important. Suppose, for example, the play has a tragic tendency. To get the audience in the proper mood from the start the curtain will rise on a " set " that will usually be painted in drab, uninviting tones. It gives the impression immediately of poverty or suffering, and the audience will feel a sense of discomfort before a line has been spoken.

In " Daybreak," we piqued the curiosity of the audience by having the curtain slowly

" A man in a dressing-gown tiptoed stealthily toward the opposite door. At this moment the grandfather clock struck five."

rise on a dark stage. Through a large, deep bay window at the back the dim light of a night sky vaguely revealed that the scene was an upper hallway. A grandfather's clock at the left of the window and an arm-chair with a high back at the right were the only furnishings. White doors, right and left, obviously led to bedrooms. From a trap extending to the footlights came a wide staircase ascending from below, the top step and newel-post being on the stage level.

A few seconds after the curtain arose, the door to the left opened very cautiously and a man in a dressing-gown appeared. His features could not be distinguished. He tiptoed stealthily toward the opposite door, and stopped after he reached the centre window, where he was silhouetted against the sky, now faintly streaked with dawn. At this moment the grandfather clock struck five. The man advanced cautiously across the stage until he reached the other door. He tried the knob; the door was locked. He put his ear to the crack of the door and listened. Apparently he heard nothing, for he turned back.

" The police inspector and several plain-clothes men discuss the best means for catching the crooks red-handed."

Then came the distinct sound of a latchkey in the door below-stairs. Immediately alert, he slipped behind a heavy velvet curtain hanging at the window. The opening of a heavy door and the soft impact of its cautious closing were heard—then the sound of footsteps proceeding with great caution up the stairs. A second later, the back of a woman's head appeared just above the footlights as she mounted the steps. At the top she leaned against the newel-post in apparent exhaustion. Presently she took a key from her hand-bag, moved carefully toward the door at the right, and gently unlocked and opened it. There was a flood of rose light from within. As the door closed the man emerged from behind the curtains. A shaft of light showed a gleaming object on the floor. He leaned over, picked up a bag with a tassel of beads, held it up, and pantomimed his amazement. The curtain fell.

" Who were these people ? " " What were they trying to conceal from each other ? " " What would happen next ? " were the logical, inevitable mental reactions on the part of the audience. The general sense of gloom had its definite purpose.

On the other hand, a bright, cheerful tone to the settings will give the impression that events are fair-favoured. This can be carried too far, just as the drabness can be carried too far. David Belasco, for example, will not permit the use of red flowers in his plays because they distract attention. This distraction is fatal to illusion and must be killed at all costs. In " Information, Please ! " during the early part of this season the opening scene was in the smart boudoir of a titled Englishwoman. The mirrors on the dressing-table reflected the light from the footlights and borders, no matter where the table was placed. To avoid such reflection, stage mirrors are usually frosted. But here in a smart bedroom the illusion would have been destroyed, for any woman would have felt that dressing-tables do not have frosted mirrors. The difficulty was finally overcome by applying a coat of white shellac, which the audience could not detect, and which did not reflect the lights.

Music is becoming more difficult to employ for stage effects. In the old days each emotion had its standard tune. There was a sentimental strain from the orchestra for a love scene, while the villain's entrance was heralded by " tum-tum-tum-tum-ta-ta," which crescendoed to the fourth " tum " and then died away softly. We have passed the age where that is permissible. But music is still as important for emotional stimulus as it was years ago, although its introduction now must be natural—all to maintain the illusion of reality.

In " Lilac Time " the scene showed British officers billeted behind the front lines in a little French town, under martial law, of course. A young French boy in the play is called before the commanding officer for playing his violin in the streets after hours. The boy explains that he has been serenading his sweetheart.

" A young French boy is called before the commanding officer for playing his violin in the streets after hours."

" You will have to do your love-making earlier in the evening," admonishes the officer.

Later, during an important love scene, the mellow strains of the violin are heard off stage. The music helped the love scene immensely, and was quite natural under the circumstances.

In the same play, Jeannine, the French girl heroine, is taught by the British soldiers to sing " Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag, and Smile, Smile, Smile." All is light and love and laughter. That is early in the play ; the audience does not hear the tune again until Jeannine receives news of her lover's death. In this tragic scene, when the agonized girl is feeling that her life is bereft of all hope, joy, dreams, she suddenly hears the " Smile, Smile, Smile " of passing soldiers, singing as they return from the front. This dramatic contrast always moved audiences deeply.

In " A Prince There Was," the hero decides everything by tossing a coin. It is

symbolic of a certain reckless trait in human nature that we all admire. One of the best bits of "business" in the play is the scene where the star is listening to a long and tiresome reading of a long and tiresome manuscript. There is a bottle of beer on the table, for which he reaches. As the audience focuses its gaze on his hand, he suddenly draws it back, extracts a coin from his pocket and tosses it. A sad look at the bottle, the hand is drawn away, and the coin goes back. Everyone knew what was coming—it was an excellent trick—yet the laughter was as deep as any heard this season.

"The actor knows that if he roundly denounces the villain, the speech may missfire, but if he rolls his eyes to heaven and brings his hand down with a resounding whack, he is sure of his round of applause."

"He stepped on my laughs" is the frequent plaint of the comedian. To understand what he means one must realize that a brief period must elapse between the delivery of a line and the time the audience "gets" it. If another player speaks too quickly, before the audience has absorbed fully the humour of the line, it "kills the laugh," or at least cripples it. Considerate actors are careful not to step on laughs, but it sometimes requires thought to gauge the audience. No two audiences are exactly alike, of course, yet it is surprising how it is possible to predict the length of time for an audience to respond.

Many persons who use the term "up stage" fail to realize that it means something more than a mental attitude. To grasp its significance in the theatre one must understand that the farther the actor is "up stage," that is, away from the footlights and near the back drop, the more necessary it becomes for the other actors in the scene to turn their faces "up stage"—away from the audience. The actor who wants to take advantage of this will just about monopolize attention. His own face and the backs of his fellow players will be toward the audience, so that the facial expressions of the latter are quite lost. I have witnessed scenes on the stage in which two equally-matched "up-stage" artistes have fought their battle to a finish in full view of the audience. First, one would take a step "up stage" and then the other, until they would both be playing against the back drop. I need not add these things do not make for efficiency.

The actor, generally of the old school, who cannot leave the stage without an "exit speech" is known to all of us. Rehearsals must be stopped while the author provides a line which he may deliver just as he reaches the door and passes from view. Failing that, he is pretty likely to slam the door as he makes his exit. For some strange reason, this slam usually makes the audience break into applause. The same type of actor knows that if he roundly denounces the villain, with the words, "The road to hell is paved with such men as you," the speech may sometimes missfire, but if on the last word he rolls his eyes to heaven and brings his hand down with a resounding whack, he is sure of his round of applause.

To tricks such as these, however, real artistes do not resort. There are a thousand and one other effects, not based on selfishness, that are practically "sure fire." Even sceptics who know all the actors in a cast personally, and all the tricks, invariably respond to emotional crises or moments of mirth. They know the theatre is but a symbol of life and not life itself, and they cry and laugh with the rest of us. And if you don't believe me, after all I have told in this article of how the emotions of the public are subtly assaulted, try to laugh in the "sob scene" of the next emotional drama that comes your way. Just try it.

THE FOUR JUST MEN

VI.

The Man Who Was Happy

By EDGAR WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY E. VERPILLEUX

ON a pleasant evening in early summer, Leon Gonsalez descended from the top of a motor-omnibus at Piccadilly Circus and, walking briskly down the Haymarket, turned into Jermyn Street, apparently oblivious of the fact that somebody was following on his heels.

Manfred looked up from his writing as his friend came in, and nodded smilingly as Leon took off his light overcoat and made his way to the window overlooking the street.

"What are you searching for so anxiously, Leon?" he asked.

"Jean Prothero, of 75, Barside Buildings, Lambeth," said Leon, not taking his eyes from the street below. "Ah, there he is, the industrious fellow!"

"Who is Jean Prothero?"

Gonsalez chuckled.

"A very daring man," evaded Leon, "to wander about the West-end at this hour." He looked at his watch. "Oh, no, not so daring," he said; "everybody who is anybody is dressing for dinner just now."

"A ladder-larcenist?" suggested Manfred, and Leon chuckled again.

"Nothing so vulgar," he said. "By ladder-larcenist I presume you mean the type of petty thief who puts a ladder against a bedroom window whilst the family are busy at dinner downstairs, and makes off with the odd scraps of jewellery he can find?"

Manfred nodded.

"That is the official description of this type of criminal," he agreed.

Leon shook his head.

"No; Mr. Prothero is interesting," he said. "Interesting for quite another reason. In the first place, he is a bald-headed criminal, or potential criminal, and as you know, my dear George, criminals are rarely bald. They are coarse-haired and they are thin-haired; they have such personal eccentricities as parting their hair on the wrong side, but they are seldom bald. The dome of Mr. Prothero's head is wholly innocent of hair of any kind. He is the second mate of a tramp steamer engaged in the fruit trade between the Canary Islands and Southampton. He has a very pretty girl for a wife and, curiously enough, a ladder-larcenist for a brother-in-law, and I have excited his suspicion quite unwittingly. Incidentally," he added, as though it were a careless afterthought, "he knows that I am one of The Four Just Men."

Manfred was silent. Then:—

"How does he know that?" he asked, quietly.

Leon had taken off his coat and had slipped his arms into a faded alpaca jacket; he did not reply until he had rolled and lit an untidy Spanish cigarette.

"Years ago, when there was a hue and a cry after that pernicious organization whose name I have mentioned, an organization which, in its humble way, endeavoured to

right the injustice of the world and to mete out to evil-doers the punishment which the ponderous machinery of the Law could not inflict, you were arrested, my dear George, and consigned to Chelmsford Jail. From there you made a miraculous escape, and reaching the coast you and I and Poiccart were taken aboard the yacht of our excellent friend the Prince of Asturias, who honoured us by acting as the fourth of our combination."

Manfred nodded.

"On that ship was Mr. Jean Prothero," said Leon. "How he came to be on the yacht of His Serene Highness I will explain at a later stage, but assuredly he was there. I never forget faces, George, but, unfortunately, I am not singular in this respect. Mr. Prothero remembered me, and seeing me in Barside Buildings——"

"What were you doing in Barside Buildings?" asked Manfred, with a faint smile.

"In Barside Buildings," replied Leon, impressively, "are two men unknown to one another, both criminals, and both colour-blind!"

Manfred put down his pen and turned, prepared for a lecture on criminal statistics, for he had noticed the enthusiasm in Gonsalez's voice.

"By means of these two men," said Leon, joyously, "I am able to refute the perfectly absurd theories which both Montagaza and Scheml have expounded—namely, that criminals are never colour-blind. The truth is, my dear George, both these men have been engaged in crime since their early youth. Both have served terms of imprisonment, and, what is more important, their fathers were colour-blind and criminals!"

"Well, what about Mr. Prothero?" said Manfred, tactfully interrupting what promised to be an exhaustive disquisition upon optical defects in relation to congenital lawlessness.

"One of my subjects is Prothero's brother-in-law, or rather, half-brother to Mrs. Prothero, her own father having been a blameless carpenter, and lives in the flat overhead. These flats are just tiny dwelling-places consisting of two rooms and a kitchen. The builders of Lambeth tenements do not allow for the luxury of a bath-room. In this way I came to meet Mrs. Prothero whilst overcoming the reluctance of her brother to talk about himself."

"And you met Prothero too, I presume?" said Manfred, patiently.

"No, I didn't meet him, except by accident. He passed on the stairs, and I saw him give me a swift glance. His face was in the shadow, and I did not recognize him until our second meeting, which was to-day. He followed me home. As a matter of fact," he added, "I have an idea that he followed me yesterday, and only came to-day to confirm my place of residence."

"You're a rum fellow," said Manfred.

"Maybe I'll be rummer," smiled Leon. "Everything depends now," he said, thoughtfully, "upon whether Prothero thinks that I recognize him. If he does——"

Leon shrugged his shoulders.

"Not for the first time have I fenced with Death and overcome him," he said, lightly.

Manfred was not deceived by the flippancy of his friend's tone.

"As bad as that, eh?" he said; "and more dangerous for him, I think," he added, quietly. "I do not like the idea of killing a man because he has recognized us—that course does not seem to fit in with my conception of justice."

"Exactly," said Leon, briskly; "and there will be no need, I think. Unless, of course——" He paused.

"Unless what?" asked Manfred.

"Unless Prothero really does love his wife, in which case it may be a very serious business."

THE next morning he strolled into Manfred's bedroom, carrying the cup of tea which the servant usually brought, and George stared up at him in amazement.

"What is the matter with you, Leon? Haven't you been to bed?"

Leon Gonsalez was dressed in what he called his "pyjama outfit." A grey flannel coat and trousers, belted at the waist, a silk shirt open at the neck, and a pair of light slippers constituted his attire, and Manfred, who associated this costume with all-night studies, was not astonished when Leon shook his head.

"I have been sitting in the dining-room, smoking the pipe of peace," he said.

"All night?" said Manfred, in surprise. "I woke up in the middle of the night and I saw no light."

"I sat in the dark," admitted Leon. "I wanted to hear things."

Manfred stirred his tea thoughtfully.

"Is it as bad as that? Did you expect——"

Leon smiled.

"I didn't expect what I got," he said. "Will you do me a favour, my dear George?"

"What is your favour?"

"I want you not to speak of Mr. Prothero for the rest of the day. Rather, I wish you to discuss purely scientific and agricultural matters, as becomes an honest Andalusian farmer, and, moreover, to speak in Spanish."

Manfred frowned.

"Why?" and then: "I'm sorry, I can't get out of the habit of being mystified, you

know, Leon. Spanish and agriculture it shall be, and no reference whatever to Prothero."

Leon was very earnest, and Manfred nodded and swung out of bed.

"May I talk of taking a bath?" he asked, sardonically.

Nothing particularly interesting happened that day. Once Manfred was on the point of referring to Leon's experience, and, divining the drift of his thought, Leon raised a warning finger.

Gonsalez could talk about crime, and did. He talked of its more scientific aspects, and laid particular stress upon his discovery of the colour-blind criminal. But of Mr. Prothero he said no word.

"'Do you recognize him?' said Leon. 'He is the detectaphone.' 'Has somebody been listening to all we've been saying?' Leon nodded."

After they had dined that night, Leon went out of the flat, and presently returned.

"Thank Heaven we can now talk without thinking," he said.

He pulled a chair to the wall and mounted it nimbly. Above his head was a tiny ventilator, fastened to the wall with screws. Humming a little tune, he turned a screwdriver deftly, and lifted the little grill from its socket, Manfred watching him gravely.

"Here it is," said Leon. "Pull up a chair, George."

"It" proved to be a small flat brown box, four inches by four, in the centre of which was a black vulcanite depression.

"Do you recognize him?" said Leon. "He is the detectaphone—in other words, a telephone-receiver fitted with a microphonic attachment."

"Has somebody been listening to all we've been saying?"

Leon nodded.

"The gentleman upstairs has had a dull and dreary day. Admitting that he speaks Spanish, and that I have said nothing which has not illuminated that branch of science which is my particular hobby," he added, modestly, "he must have been terribly bored."

"But——" began Manfred.

"He is out now," said Gonsalez. "But to make perfectly sure——"

With deft fingers he detached one of the wires by which the box was suspended in the ventilator shaft.

"Mr. Prothero came last night," he explained. "He took the room upstairs, and particularly asked for it. This I learnt from the head-waiter—he adores me, because I give him exactly three times the tip which he gets from other residents in these service flats, and because I tip him three times as often. I didn't exactly know what Prothero's game was, until I heard the tap-tap of the microphone coming down the shaft."

He was busy refixing the grill of the ventilator. Presently he jumped down.

"Would you like to come to Lambeth to-day? I do not think there is much chance of our meeting Mr. Prothero. On the other hand, we shall see Mrs. Prothero shopping at eleven o'clock in the London Road, for she is a methodical lady."

"Why do you want me to see her?" asked Manfred.

He was not usually allowed to see the workings of any of Leon's schemes until the dramatic *dénouement*, which was meat and drink to him, was near at hand.

"I want you, with your wide knowledge of human nature, to tell me whether she is the type of woman for whom a bald-headed man would commit murder," he said, simply, and Manfred stared at him in amazement.

"The victim being——?"

"Me!" replied Gonsalez, and doubled up with silent laughter at the blank look on Manfred's face.

IT was four minutes to eleven exactly when Manfred saw Mrs. Prothero. He felt the pressure of Leon's hand on his arm and looked.

"There she is," said Leon.

A girl was crossing the road. She was neatly, even well dressed for one of her class. She carried a market bag in one gloved hand and a purse in the other.

"She's pretty enough," said Manfred.

The girl had paused to look in a jeweller's window, and Manfred had time to observe her. Her face was sweet and womanly, the eyes big and dark, the little chin firm and rounded.

"What do you think of her?" said Leon.

"I think she's rather a perfect specimen of young womanhood," said Manfred.

"Come along and meet her," said the other, and took his arm.

The girl looked round at first in surprise, and then with a smile. Manfred had an impression of flashing white teeth and scarlet lips parted in amusement. Her voice was not the voice of a lady, but it was quiet and musical.

"Good morning, doctor," she said to Leon. "What are you doing in this part of the world so early in the morning?"

"Doctor," noted Manfred.

The adaptable Gonsalez assumed many professions for the purpose of securing his information.

"We have just come from Guy's Hospital. This is Dr. Selbert," he introduced Manfred. "You are shopping, I suppose?"

She nodded.

"Really there was no need for me to come out, Mr. Prothero being away at the docks for three days," she replied.

"Have you seen your brother this morning?" asked Leon.

A shadow fell over the girl's face.

"No," she said, shortly.

Evidently, thought Manfred, she was not particularly proud of her relationship. Possibly she suspected his illicit profession, but at any rate she had no desire to discuss him, for she changed the subject quickly.

They talked for a little while, and then with an apology she left them, and they saw her vanish through the wide door of a grocer's store.

"Well, what do you think of her?"

"She is a very beautiful girl," said Manfred, quietly.

"The kind of girl that would make a bald-headed criminal commit a murder?" asked Leon, and Manfred laughed.

"It is not unlikely," he said; "but why should he murder you?"

"*Nous verrons*," replied Leon.

WHEN they returned to their flat in the afternoon the mail had been and there were half-a-dozen letters. One bearing a heavy crest upon the envelope attracted Manfred's attention.

"Lord Pertham," he said, looking at the signature. "Who is Lord Pertham?"

"I haven't a 'Who's Who' handy, but I seem to know the name," said Leon. "What does Lord Pertham want?"

"I'll read you the note," said Manfred.

"Dear Sir," it read. "Our mutual friend, Mr. Fare, of Scotland Yard, is dining with us to-night at Connaught Gardens, and I wonder whether you would come along? Mr. Fare tells me that you are one of the cleverest criminologists of the century, and as it is a study which I have made particularly my own, I shall be glad to make your acquaintance."

It was signed "Pertham," and there was a postscript running:—

"Of course, this invitation also includes your friend."

Manfred rubbed his chin.

"I really do not want to dine fashionably to-night," he said.

"But I do," said Leon, promptly. "I have developed a taste for English cooking, and I seem to remember that Lord Pertham is an epicurean."

Promptly at the hour of eight they presented themselves at the big house standing at the corner of Connaught Gardens, and were admitted by a footman, who took their hats and coats and showed them into a large and gloomy drawing-room.

A man was standing with his back to the fire—a tall man of fifty, with a mane of grey hair that gave him an almost leonine appearance.

He came quickly to meet them.

"Which is Mr. Fuentes?" he asked, speaking in English.

"I am Signor Fuentes," replied Manfred, with a smile; "but it is my friend who is the criminologist."

"Delighted to meet you both—but I have an apology to make to you," he said, speaking hurriedly. "By some mischance—the stupidity of one of my men—the letter addressed to Fare was not posted. I only discovered it half an hour ago. I hope you don't mind."

Manfred murmured something conventional, and then the door opened to admit a lady.

"I want to present you to her ladyship," said Lord Pertham.

The woman who came in was thin and vinegary; a pair of pale eyes, a tight-lipped mouth, and a trick of frowning deprived her of whatever charm Nature had given to her.

Leon Gonsalez, who analysed faces automatically and mechanically, said "Spite—suspicion—uncharity—vanity."

The frown deepened as she offered a limp hand.

"Dinner is ready, Pertham," she said, and made no attempt to be agreeable to her guests.

IT was an awkward meal. Lord Pertham was nervous, and his nervousness might have communicated itself to the two men if they had been anything but what they were. This big man seemed to be in terror of his wife—was deferential, even humble in her presence, and when at last she swept her sour face from the room he made no attempt to hide his sigh of relief.

"I am afraid we haven't given you a very good dinner," he said. "Her ladyship has had a little—er—disagreement with my cook."

Apparently her ladyship was in the habit of having little disagreements with her cook, for in the course of the conversation which followed he casually mentioned certain servants in his household who were no longer in his employ. He spoke mostly of their facial characteristics, and it seemed to Manfred, who was listening as intently as his companion, that his lordship was not a great authority upon the subject. He spoke haltingly, made several obvious slips, but Leon did not correct him. He mentioned casually that he had an additional interest in criminals because his own life had been threatened.

"Let us go up and join my lady," he said, after a long and blundering exposition of some phase of criminology which Manfred could have sworn he had read up for the occasion.

They went up the broad stairs into a little drawing-room on the first floor. It was empty. His lordship was evidently surprised.

"I wonder——" he began, when the door opened and Lady Pertham ran in. Her face was white and her thin lips were trembling.

"Pertham," she said, rapidly, 'I'm sure there's a man in my dressing-room."

"In your dressing-room?" said Lord Pertham, and ran out quickly.

The two men would have followed him, but he stopped half-way up the stairs and waved them back.

"You had better wait with her ladyship," he advised. "Ring for Thomas, my love," he continued.

Standing at the foot of the stairs they heard him moving about. Presently they

heard a cry and the sound of a struggle. Manfred was half-way up the stairs when a door slammed above. Then came the sound of voices and a shot, followed by a heavy fall.

Manfred flung himself against the door whence the sound came.

"It's all right," said Lord Pertham's voice.

A second later he unlocked the door and opened it.

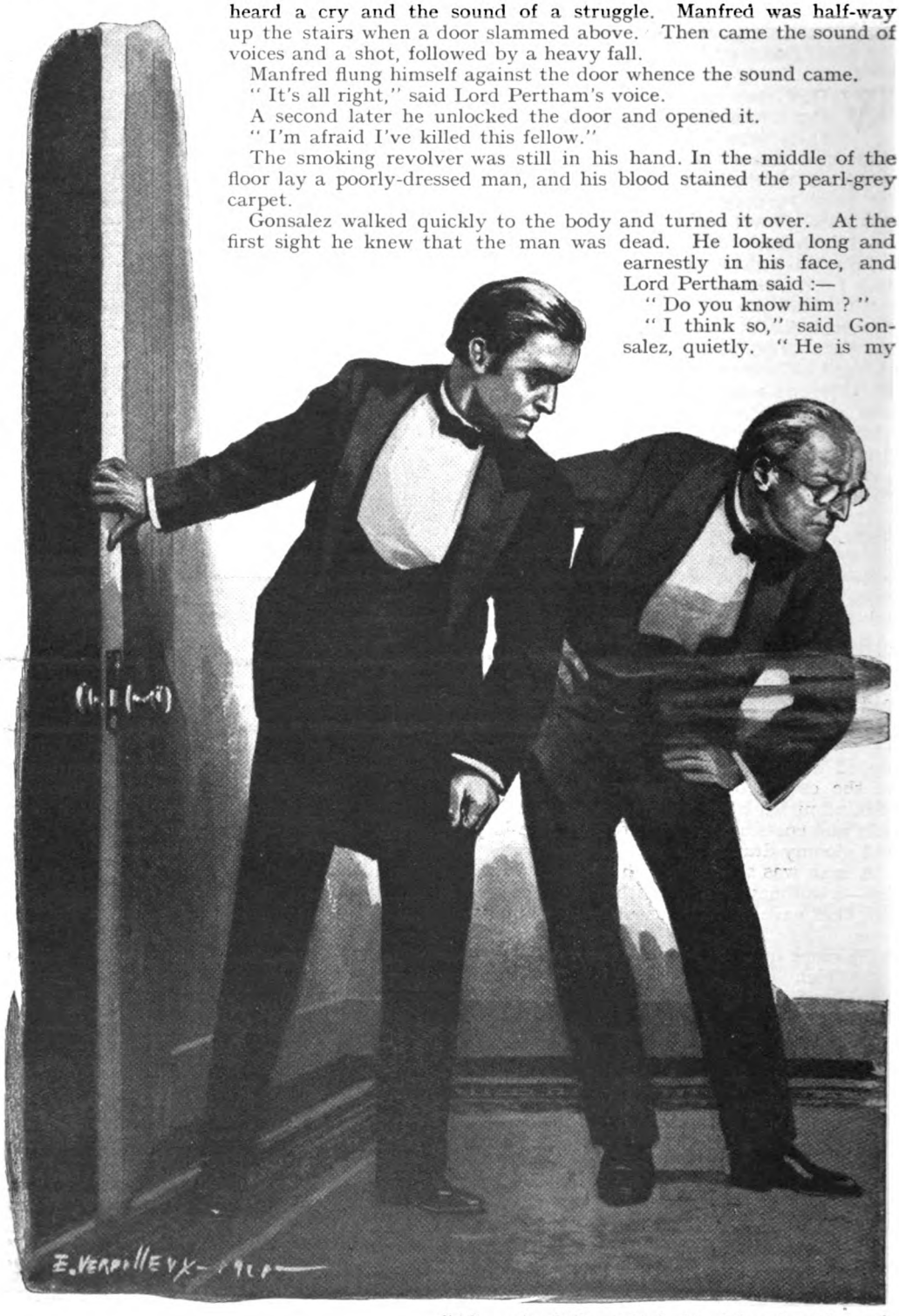
"I'm afraid I've killed this fellow."

The smoking revolver was still in his hand. In the middle of the floor lay a poorly-dressed man, and his blood stained the pearl-grey carpet.

Gonsalez walked quickly to the body and turned it over. At the first sight he knew that the man was dead. He looked long and earnestly in his face, and Lord Pertham said :—

"Do you know him ?"

"I think so," said Gonsalez, quietly. "He is my



"'I'm afraid I've killed this fellow,' said Lord

colour-blind criminal," for he had recognized the brother of Mrs. Prothero.

They walked home to their lodgings that night, leaving Lord Pertham closeted with a detective inspector and Lady Pertham in hysterics.

Neither man spoke until they reached their flat, then Leon, with a sigh of content, curled up in the big arm-chair and pulled lovingly at an evil-smelling cigar.

"Leon!"

He took no notice.

"Leon!"

Leon shifted his head round and met George's eye.

"Did anything about that shooting to-night strike you as peculiar?"

"Several things," said Leon.

"Such as?"

"Such as the oddness of the fate that took Slippery Bill—that was the name of my burglar—to Lord Pertham's house. It was not odd that he should commit the burglary, because he was a ladder-larcenist, as you call him. By the way, did you look at the dead man's hand?" he asked, twisting round and peering across the table at Manfred.

"No, I didn't," said the other, in surprise.

"What a pity! You would have thought it still more peculiar. What are the things you were thinking of?"

"I was wondering why Lord Pertham carried a revolver. He must have had it in his pocket at dinner."

"That is easily explained," said Gonsalez. "Don't you remember his telling us that his life had been threatened in anonymous letters?"

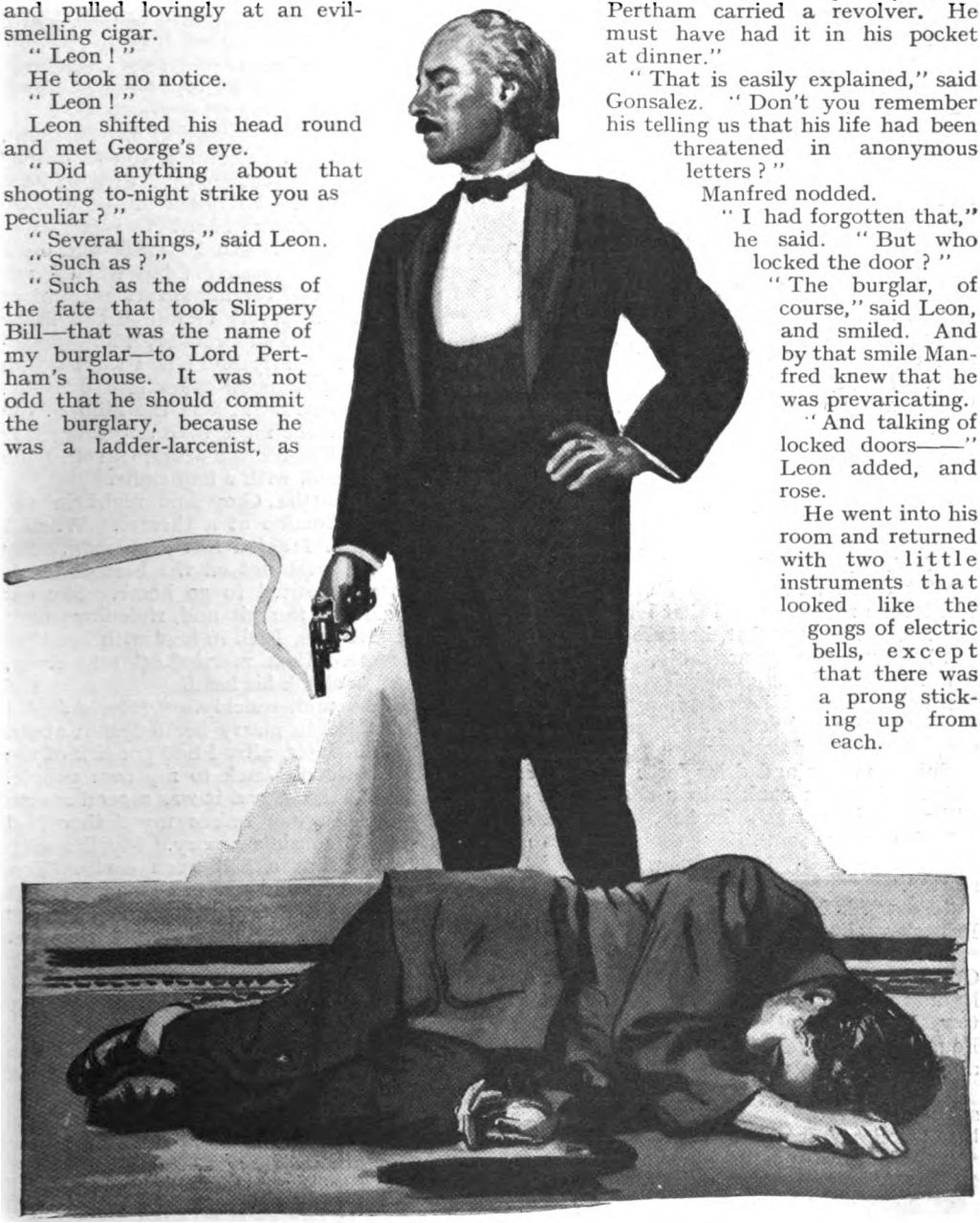
Manfred nodded.

"I had forgotten that," he said. "But who locked the door?"

"The burglar, of course," said Leon, and smiled. And by that smile Manfred knew that he was prevaricating.

"And talking of locked doors——" Leon added, and rose.

He went into his room and returned with two little instruments that looked like the gongs of electric bells, except that there was a prong sticking up from each.



Pertham, the smoking revolver still in his hand."

He locked the sitting-room door and placed one of these articles on the floor, sticking the spike into the bottom of the door so that it was impossible to open without exercising pressure upon the bell. He tried it and there was a shrill peal.

"That's all right," he said, and turned to examine the windows.

"Are you expecting burglars?"

"I am rather," said Leon, "and really I cannot afford to lose my sleep."

Not satisfied with the fastening of the window he pushed in a little wedge, and performed the same office to the second of the windows looking upon the street.

Another door, leading to Manfred's room from the passage without, he treated as he had served the first.

IN the middle of the night there was a frantic ring from one of the bells. Manfred leapt out of bed and switched on the light. His own door was fast and he raced into the sitting-room, but Gonsalez was there before him examining the little sentinel by the door. The door had been unlocked. He kicked away the alarm with his slippered foot.

"Come in, Lord Pertham," he said. "Let's talk this matter over."

There was a momentary silence, then the sound of a slippered foot, and a man came in. He was fully dressed and hatless, and Manfred, seeing the bald head, gasped.

"Sit down and make yourself at home, and let me relieve you of that lethal weapon you have in your pocket, because this matter can be arranged very amicably," said Leon.

It was undoubtedly Lord Pertham, though the great mop of hair had vanished, and Manfred could only stare as Leon's left hand slipped into the dressing-gown pocket of the midnight visitor and drew forth a revolver.

Lord Pertham sank into a chair. For a while the silence was unbroken.

"You may remember the Honourable George Fearnside," began Leon, and Manfred started.

"Fearnside? Why, he was on the Prince's yacht——"

"He was on the Prince's yacht," agreed Gonsalez, "and we thoroughly believed that he did not associate us with escaping malefactors, but apparently he knew us for The Four Just Men. You came into your title about six years ago, didn't you, Pertham?"

The bowed figure nodded. Presently he sat up—his face was white and there were black circles about his eyes.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "it seems that instead of getting you, you have got me. Now, what are you going to do?"

Gonsalez laughed softly.

"For myself," he said, "I am certainly not going in the witness-box to testify that Lord Pertham is a bigamist and for many years has been leading a double life. Because that would mean I should also have to admit certain uncomfortable things about myself."

The man licked his lips and then:—

"I came to kill you," he said, thickly.

"So we gather," said Manfred. "What is this story, Leon?"

"Perhaps his lordship will tell us," said Gonsalez.

Lord Pertham looked round for something.

"I want a glass of water," he said, and it was Leon who brought it.

"It is perfectly true," said Lord Pertham, after a while. "I recognized you fellows as two of The Four Just Men. I used to be a great friend of His Highness, and it was by accident that I was on board the yacht when you were taken off. His Highness told me a yarn about some escapade, but when I got to Spain and read the newspaper account of the escape I was pretty certain that I knew who you were. You probably know something about my early life, how I went before the mast as a common sailor and travelled all over the world. It was the kind of life which satisfied me more than any other. If you ever want to see the world, travel in the fo'c'sle," he said, with a half-smile.

"I met Martha Grey one night in the East-end of London at a theatre. When I was a seaman I acted like a seaman. My father and I were not on the best of terms and I never wanted to go home. She sat by my side in the pit and, ridiculous as it may seem to you, I fell in love with her."

"You were then married?" said Leon, but the man shook his head.

"No," he said, quickly. "Like a fool I was persuaded to marry her ladyship about three months later, after I had got sick of the sea and had come back to my own people. She was an heiress, and it was a good match for me. That was before my father had inherited his cousin's money. My life with her ladyship was a hell upon earth. You saw her to-night and you can guess the kind of woman she is. I have too great a respect for women and have lived too much in awe of them to exercise any control over her viperish temper, and it was the miserable life I lived with her which drove me to seek out Martha.

"Martha is a good girl," he said, and there was a glitter in his eye as he challenged denial. "The purest, the dearest, the sweetest woman that ever lived. It was when I met her again that I realized how deeply in love I was, and—as with a girl of her character there was no other way—I married her. I had fever when I was on a voyage to Australia, and lost all my hair. That was long before I met Martha. I

suppose it was vanity on my part, but when I went back to my own life and my own people, as I did for a time after that, I had a wig made which served the double purpose of concealing my infirmity and preventing my being recognized by my former shipmates.

" As the little hair I wore had gone grey, I had the wig greyed too, had it made large and poetical "—he smiled sadly—" to make my disguise more complete. Martha didn't mind my bald head, God bless her ! " he said, softly, " and my life with her has been a complete and unbroken period of happiness. I have to leave her at times to manage my own affairs, and in those times I pretend to be at sea, just as I used to pretend to her ladyship that business affairs called me to America to explain my absence from her."

" The man you shot was Martha's half-brother, of course ? " said Gonsalez, and Lord Pertham nodded.

" It was just ill-luck which brought him to my house," he said ; " sheer bad luck. In the struggle my wig came off, he recognized me, and I shot him," he said, simply. ' I shot him deliberately and in cold blood, not only because he threatened to wreck my happiness, but because for years he has terrorized his sister and has been living on her poor earnings."

Gonsalez nodded.

" I saw grey hair in his hands, and I guessed what had happened," he said.

" Now, what are you going to do ? " asked the Earl of Pertham.

Leon was smoking now.

" What are *you* going to do ? " he asked in retort. " Perhaps you would like me to tell you."

" I should," said the man, earnestly.

" You are going to take your bigamous wife abroad just as soon as this inquest is over, and you are going to wait a reasonable time and then persuade your wife to get a divorce. After which you will marry your Mrs. Prothero in your own name," said Gonsalez.

" LEON," said Manfred, after Fearnside had gone back to the room above, the room he had taken in the hope of discovering how much Gonsalez knew, " I think you are a thoroughly unmoral person. Suppose Lady Pertham does not divorce his lordship ? "

Leon laughed.

" There is really no need for her to divorce Lord Pertham," he said, " for his lordship told us a little lie. He married his Martha first, deserted her, and went back to her. I happen to know this because I have already examined both registers, and I know there was a Mrs. Prothero before there was a Lady Pertham."

" You're a wonderful fellow, Leon," said Manfred, admiringly.

' I am," admitted Leon Gonsalez.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 99.

(The Third of the Series.)

THE proverb says, and so it must be true,
That folk who live in *one* ought not to *two*.

1. A noble knight, in good King Arthur's days.
2. This longer word means much the same as maze.
3. Son of a king, by wicked uncle slain.
4. A dry dust-laden wind blows o'er the main.
5. A little creature, tamed in famous play.
6. Alone he kept the bridge, in famous lay.
7. Consult him, should your sight begin to fail.
8. The sheep, when dead, can spare both head and tail.
9. Princes see first. It is the last but one.
10. Mother will tell us that the day is done.
11. Make silver taste ? What can is quickly traced.
    But who composed what can make silver taste ?

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 99 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on October 11th.*

To every light one alternative answer may be sent : it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 98.

FROM this last remnant of our French domain
Cheap holidays and milking cows we gain.

1. One prefix add, an artist if you wish :
   Another half gives an Italian dish.
2. She married—that we know. Did she exist ?
   We are left doubtful by the novelist.
3. Hence made the harmonious blacksmith melody :
   'Twas underneath a spreading chestnut tree.
4. Where pedlars ply a roaring trade by night,
   Its flare affords the necessary light.
5. Trained in this art, the captain does not dread
   The rocks beneath or tempests overhead.
6. From bleak Castile he brought his Spanish queen.
   Few greater monarchs England yet has seen.
7. Who of its fruit the taste has once enjoyed
   Joins, all too willingly, the unemployed.

KING COLE.

1.	C	e l l	I
2.	H	a r r i	S
3.	A	n v i	L
4.	N	a p h t h	A
5.	N	a v i g a t i o	N
6.	E	d w a r	D
7.	L	o t u	S

NOTES.—Light 1. Botticelli, vermicelli. 2. Mrs. Harris. Dickens. 6. Edward the First.

SEVENTEENTH SERIES : RESULT.

Four competitors answered every light correctly. They will share the prizes, receiving three guineas each, and must now be considered ineligible for prizes during the eighteenth and nineteenth series. As many as twenty-five solvers missed only one light in the series, generally " Euston " in No. 96, which only seven answers gave.

The winners are : Cyno, Mr. C. Norman, 28, Duke's Avenue, New Malden, Surrey ; Peci, Mr. G. E. Matthews, 53, Stockwell Green, S.W.9 ; Pete, Mr. H. F. Samman, Straylea, Port Erin, Isle of Man ; Profit, Mr. W. P. Barnsdall, 27, Duke's Avenue, New Malden, Surrey.

The FINE ART OF FRAUD

by CHARLES KINGSTON

ILLUSTRATED BY W. G. WHITAKER

CRIMINALS are seldom original, chiefly because as a class they are singularly unintelligent and undeveloped, and also because human nature is in the main fallible and gullible. Why should a rogue trouble to invent new traps when the "confidence" trick continues to find victims in London and New York and "gold bricks" are bought by adults in the twentieth century? Yet now and then a crook does startle the world by bringing off a fraud astonishing alike in its conception and manner of achievement. The most spectacular crime, however, was the work of an amateur, and "Captain" Koepenik, a cobbler with a sense of humour, will always have his place in history. But he was hardly a criminal in the usual meaning of the term, and he deserves well of republican Germany for having been the first man of his race to expose "Prussianism" to the blight of ridicule.

The leader of the "Yellow Kid" gang displayed something of Koepenik's coolness and acting ability when in March, 1918, he swindled an astute American banker out of thirty-six thousand pounds. The fraud was a very remarkable one, and its very simplicity contributed most towards ensuring its success. Of course, it was carefully planned, and luck played an important part, but at the same time it is not difficult to understand how it completely fooled the hard-headed man of the world who was victimized by it.

One afternoon Mr. Albert C. Charles, banker, of Kokomo, Indiana, was interviewed at his office by a tall, well-dressed man whose strong, impressive features and abrupt methods suggested the typical industrial magnate. When the stranger intimated that he represented a group of capitalists who were anxious to purchase a certain steel plant in which Mr. Charles had heavily invested he was doubly welcome, for the business was languishing for want of ready money and Mr. Charles was very anxious to get rid of it. At the same time the banker was on his guard, for in common with other financiers he had recently been defrauded by sellers of bogus stock purporting to be issued by the directors of the leading American steel companies, and in the course of conversation he referred to his unhappy experience.

"I have heard of that old form of swindle," said Mr. Blake, coolly, "but as I deal only in cash and never in scrip I can't be taken in. Figure out how much you want for the plant, and when we've agreed to terms I'll hand you a certified cheque for the full amount."

It was almost too good to be true, but Mr. Charles was very happy, and the result of a couple of hours' discussion was that he agreed to accept from Mr. Blake the sum of one million seven hundred thousand pounds.

"Before I buy," said the capitalist, who appeared to have forgotten nothing and who had proved during the negotiations that he was up to every move in the business game, "I must see the receipt for the income-tax for the past twelve months."

"It hasn't been paid yet," answered Mr. Charles, "but I will call and settle with the collector this evening."

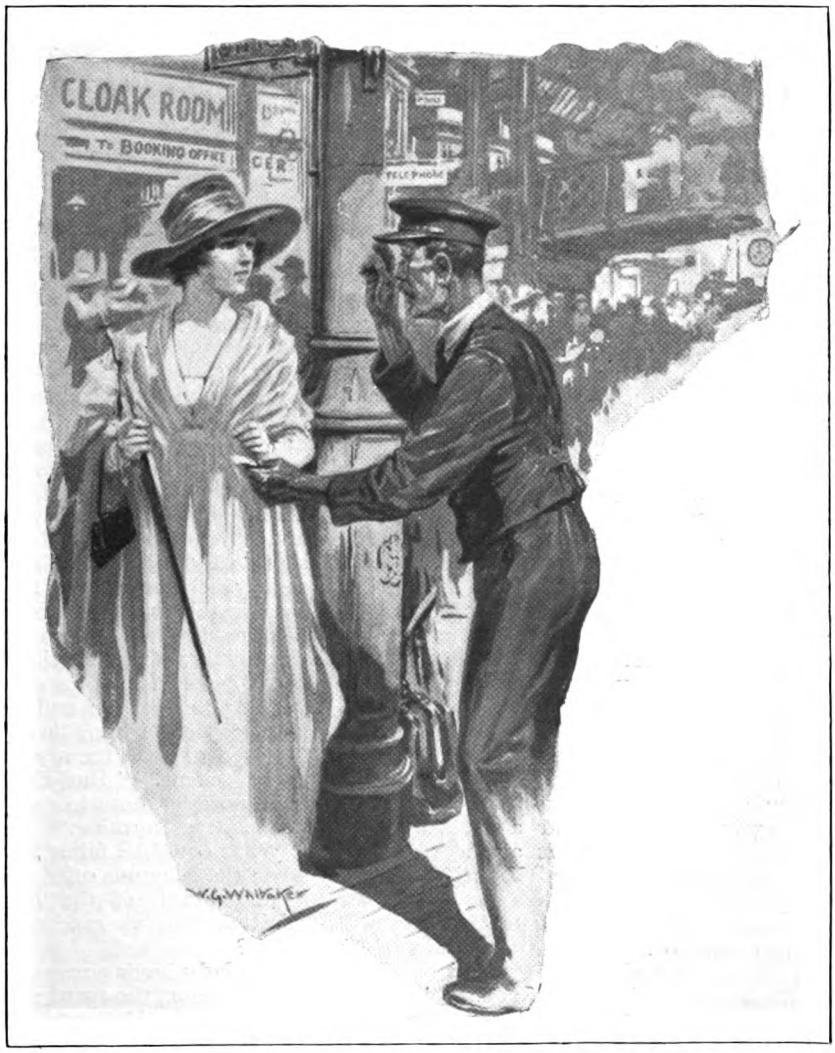
"In that event I will be here to-morrow morning at ten to complete the deal," said Mr. Blake, and the two men shook hands and parted.

Estimating the exact sum due to the Revenue was not an easy task, but Mr. Charles eventually decided that the company owed thirty-six thousand pounds, and with this amount in cash he drove to the building in which the office of the collector was situated, entered the room on the second floor, paid over the money, was given a receipt, and went home feeling the most contented man in the United States.

But in the morning no Mr. Blake appeared and the hours passed slowly for the banker, who was chagrined to think that the capitalist should have changed his mind. It was only when he received a peremptory demand for payment from the income-tax collector that he instituted the inquiries which led to the discovery of the biggest swindle of modern times. Before calling at the bank the "Yellow Kid" had rented the office next to that of the Inland Revenue Collector, and, having placed a confederate in it, had visited Mr. Blake and had remained negotiating with him until the Revenue office had closed for the day. And once the genuine collector had gone the "Yellow Kid's" partner had merely to change the plates on the office doors to make it certain that Mr. Charles would pay him that thirty-six thousand pounds. Everything worked in favour of the crooks, and they got clear away with the booty.

A clever fraud was perpetrated at Liverpool Street Station some few years ago. A lady had deposited a large dressing-case containing her jewel-box and other valuables at the railway company's cloak-room, receiving in exchange the official receipt ticket.

As she was walking away, a porter ran after her and, respectfully touching his cap, explained that his mate had given her the wrong ticket, apologized for the blunder, and gave her the "correct" one in exchange for the original.



"As she was walking away, a porter ran after her and explained that his mate had given her the wrong ticket."

Upon returning to claim her property, however, she was handed a shabby-looking case quite unlike her own, the contents of which were worthless. Needless to say the bogus "porter" who had deposited this had used her original ticket to re-claim her valuables, and had disappeared.

A MORE complicated if not more audacious crime was that of a German named Kumf, and it failed only because of the stupidity which is inherent in the cleverest rogues. Kumf was a third-rate comedian who sang in beer-halls and whose speciality was the impersonation of middle-aged women addicted to alcohol, and it was while "resting" that he perpetrated his amazing fraud. Disguised as a woman he presented himself at the office of one of the smaller Berlin insurance companies and informed a clerk that "she" wished to insure her husband's life. The ordinary proposal form was handed to "her," and when it had been filled in the husband was requested to call to be examined by the medical officer. Kumf accordingly reappeared in male attire, was examined and passed, and all that remained was to pay the first premium. Here the rogue displayed an artfulness approaching genius. He pretended to be seriously ill and had the rumour of his condition brought to the notice of the company, which immediately sent a doctor to examine him. When the gentleman entered Kumf's bedroom he found him suffering from a rash and with an abnormal temperature, but he reported to his directors that it was nothing very serious. Thus when Kumf, once more dressed as a woman, entered the insurance office with the money to pay the premium it was accepted, and yet he had in a measure prepared the company for his early death.

Having insured himself for twenty thousand marks (then worth a thousand pounds), Kumf set about arranging to collect the cash. In the neighbourhood there was an aged doctor who was nearly blind and deaf, but who did his utmost to conceal these defects, and Kumf quickly turned to advantage the vanity of the ancient medico. Retiring to bed again he dispatched a messenger to Dr. Becker to request his attendance, and when he arrived he found Herr Kumf in a state of coma. The old man prescribed and went away, and in the morning "Frau" Kumf called to inform him that his patient had died. The doctor thereupon gave a certificate, and with this in "her" pocket the disconsolate "widow" extracted the twenty thousand marks from the insurance company.

The fraud was now complete and apparently there was no danger to the crook, but he was so overcome by the possession of so much money that he indulged in an orgy at a distant beer-hall, still disguised as a woman. There his sex was suspected by a policeman, but a tip in time saved the situation, and he returned home in an hilarious condition, waking almost every tenant in the building, where he had rented a room in the name of "Frau Kumf." Amongst the tenants was a porter in the service of the insurance company, and when he casually criticized the callous conduct of the "widow" in the hearing of a senior clerk, the latter informed a director, who promptly had Kumf's movements shadowed, and three days later the comedian was in a cell in Moabit Prison. The following January—1891—he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment.

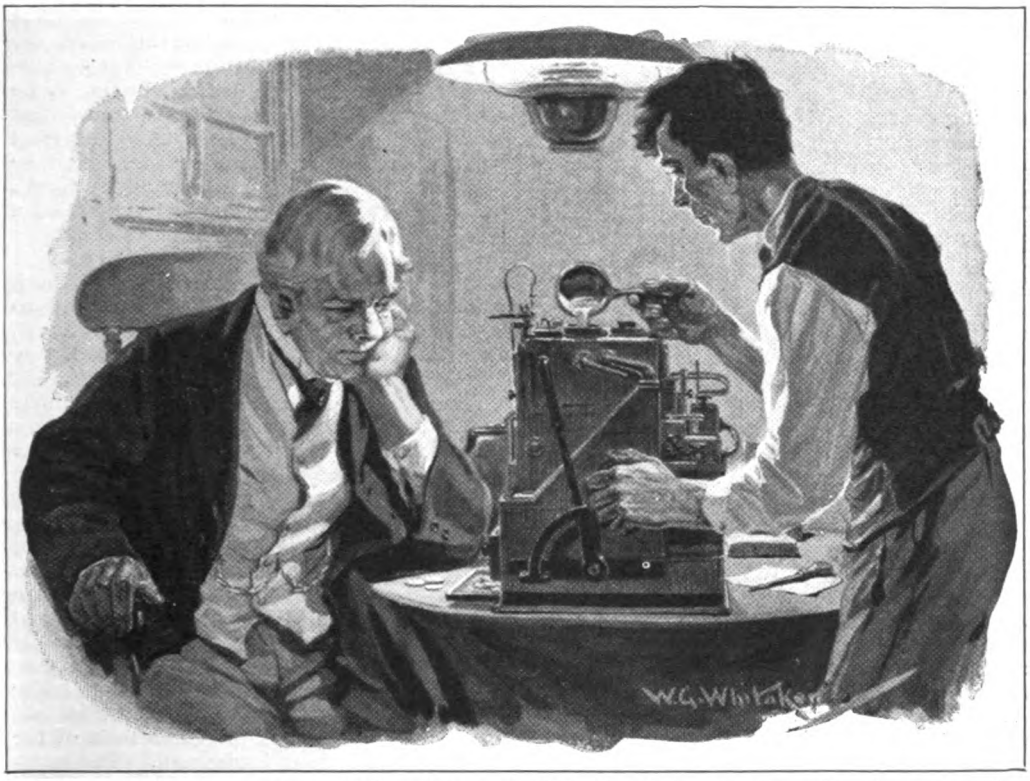
ANOTHER impersonation fraud, which, if not quite so elaborate as Herr Kumf's, proved more remunerative, was that of an English matrimonial agent, who perpetrated it again and again until over-confidence rendered him careless and, consequently, vulnerable. His particular swindle deserves mention on account of its elementary simplicity. It was his habit to get into touch by means of advertisements with romantic maiden ladies who were seeking husbands by unconventional means, and when he found a desirable victim he would inform her that he had been commissioned by "a gentleman of forty, tall, and young-looking for his age, who was in want of a wife in the thirties." Stress would be laid on the age, the agent adding that his client had a horror of flappers and "modern young women who talked slang all day long." Of course, the handsome bachelor would be credited with a comfortable but not excessive fortune, and Martin—the agent—would express himself willing to wait until the lady had met his client before asking for a fee.

"If you like him and he proposes to you and you accept him, then you can pay me a hundred guineas for my services," he wrote to one client. "But should you decide to have nothing more to do with him you need not pay me anything."

What could be fairer than that, especially when the generous offer was accompanied by a photograph of the Eligible One, which depicted him as exceedingly good to look upon?

The lady having responded with a request for a meeting, the agent would fix an appointment in the Midlands. His office was in Manchester and he did business mostly with Londoners, and, consequently, it was at Leicester that he usually met the lady, for, of course, Martin was the original of the

photograph, although he had a wife and three children! A man of charming manners, and undeniably handsome, he never had any difficulty in making an impression on the opposite sex, and when he parted from the lady, to whom he had paid devoted attention, she was only too eager to send along the hundred guineas to Martin at Manchester address immediately he had interviewed a young lady at Rugby, for, delighted by "Mr. Spencer" and anxious to see the charmer again, she journeyed straight on to Manchester with the fee she was to pay. Her object was to ask Mr. Martin to arrange there and then for another interview with the wealthy "Mr. Spencer," and when she walked



"A marvellous apparatus which, with a simplicity bordering on the miraculous, manufactured counterfeit coin that could not be distinguished from the real thing by experts."

Manchester, having come to the conclusion that "Mr. Spencer" was in love with her and would propose at their next meeting. But, alas for her hopes, she would never see the alluring "Mr. Spencer" again, and the only result of her expenditure would be a letter from Martin expressing his regret that his two clients had not come to an understanding and promising to introduce her free of charge to the next gentleman who applied to him for a wife. That was the last she ever heard of Mr. Martin and his friends.

Of course, Martin did not always charge a hundred guineas. He was quite willing to accept half or a quarter of that fee when he could get no more, but he managed to make a considerable income for several years in spite of one or two mishaps. One of these was due to his failure to change his Man- into his office and saw the "well-to-do bachelor," she guessed how she had been tricked. She did not, however, prosecute, for she occupied a good social position and she dared not face the ridicule of Press and public.

It is good to know, however, that the scoundrel came to grief. Greatly daring, he planned to blackmail one of his victims, a middle-aged lady, who was the widow of a doctor. She paid hush-money to prevent him exposing her to her friends, but the lady had a trustee who wanted to know why she drew a cheque for a large amount on a certain date, and when his curiosity was satisfied he had the matrimonial agent arrested, and Mr. Justice Grantham, always a terror to blackmailers, considered it would be in the interests of the country if Martin spent twelve years in penal servitude.

For sheer impudence nothing can beat the *coup* brought off by a gang of racecourse sharps in the early 'nineties. They actually invented a race meeting in the South of England, telegraphing on an August Bank Holiday, when there are always several meetings held, to a London sporting daily the " results," giving each race, horse, jockey, weight, trainer, and starting-price. They had, of course, on the morning of the " races " backed the " winners " with certain well-known starting-price bookmakers, all of whom paid on the prices as returned by the sporting journal referred to, and the rogues got away with the spoils long before their fraud was discovered.

THE rogue who practises a swindle which makes his victims partners in his crime is generally safe because it is in the interest of those he has defrauded to keep him out of the dock, but it requires unusual ingenuity to invent a scheme which will answer that purpose. Some years ago there was an action tried in Ireland arising out of the following unique circumstances. In a certain town there was a prosperous butcher whose respectability was unquestioned and whose character stood high in the community. To him came an acquaintance who whispered that he had evolved a marvellous apparatus which, with a simplicity bordering on the miraculous, manufactured counterfeit coin that could not be distinguished from the real thing by experts. The butcher was frankly incredulous but not disgusted. The mirage of a profit of several hundreds per cent. was sufficient to deaden his conscience, but he did not intend to part with any of his money until the machine demonstrated its ability in his presence and under his strict supervision. The inventor expressed himself as only too willing to submit his statements to the severest tests, and accordingly, one night, in the back parlour of the shop, he placed his " machine " on the table—it was made of wood with a zinc lining—and with the butcher watching his every movement he poured some liquid lead into one end and watched it trickle through the canal-like cavity which ran the length of the apparatus. Near the bottom the molten stream passed into a drawer in which it apparently rested, and where, the inventor said, it was formed into circular discs and stamped after the manner of genuine half-crowns. When each coin was perfect it dropped through a sort of trap-door to the bottom of the machine, and all the fortunate owner of this miniature El Dorado had to do was to wait until it was cool enough to handle. Again and again the inventor demonstrated the wonderful properties of his invention, but even when the butcher was convinced he hesitated to buy a half share for five hundred pounds. The apparatus was very crude and its owner had the reputation of being " warm," and as a commercial man he hesitated to risk his money in the exploitation of the miraculous.

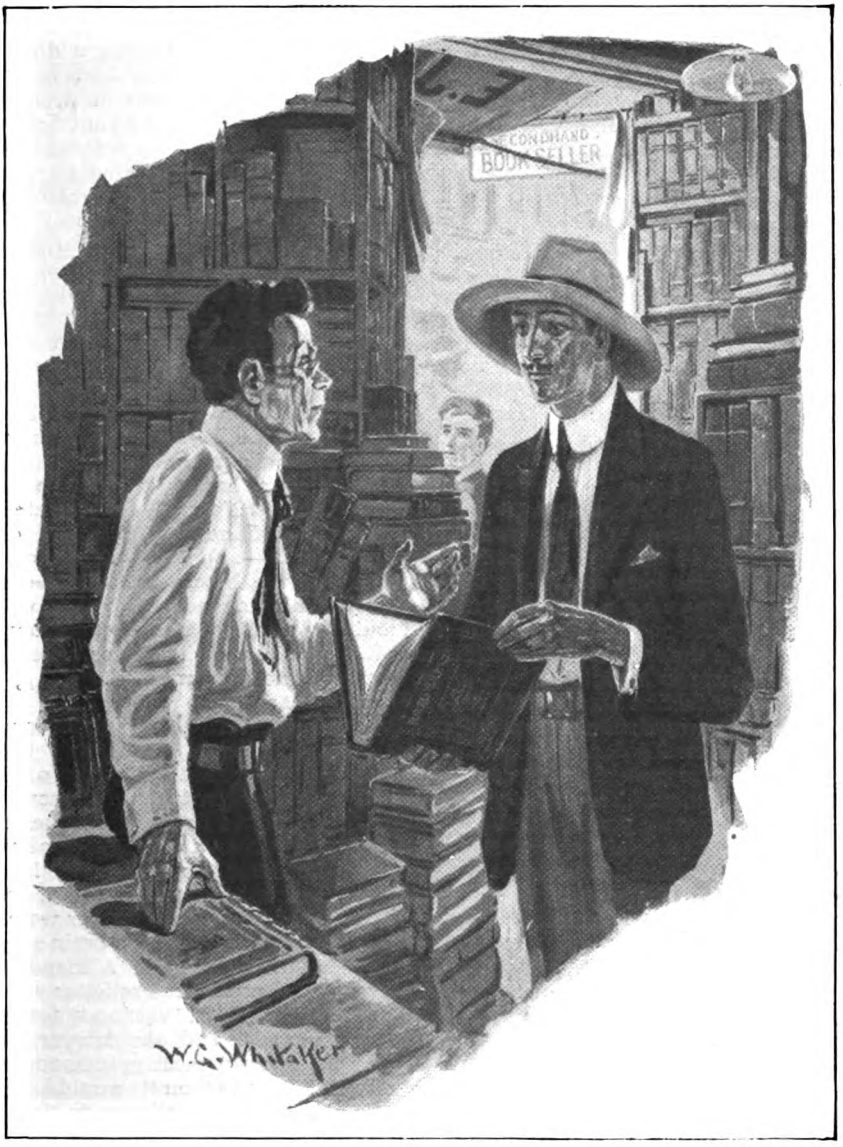
" Look here," said the inventor, displaying wonderful patience and good temper, " take these half-crowns to the bank and ask them to change them. They'll soon tell you if they're counterfeit."

The butcher, however, had his character to consider. He was an honest man—as he later affirmed—and he did not intend to be accused of attempting to pass counterfeit coin. When, therefore, he entered the local bank with ten of the half-crowns which he had seen manufactured by his friend's apparatus, to avoid misunderstandings of a painful nature he bluntly asked the cashier to examine them and give his opinion.

" These are all right," said the bank official, with a smile. " There's no need to be afraid of them because they're new. Bring along as many as you like and I'll give you banknotes or gold for their value."

After that the butcher was only too anxious to purchase a half-share in the miracle-worker for five hundred pounds, and when the inventor received the money he handed the apparatus over to his partner for " safe keeping," and departed to his home. A few weeks later there was a stormy encounter between the partners, for in the meantime the butcher had discovered how he had been bamboozled. The " inventor " had palmed off on him genuine half-crowns which he had heated and had placed in the cavity of the machine before entering the shop. The molten lead and the rest of the tricks had been all so much bluff for the benefit of the suspicious and dour tradesman. The latter now demanded the return of his money, but it was refused, and threats to prosecute had no effect beyond exciting derisive laughter from the " inventor," who pointed out that the butcher had conspired with him to defraud the State. Nevertheless, the butcher brought an action in the civil courts, and after much merriment had been excited by counsel for the defendant, who made the most of the material for humorous sallies placed at his disposal by his client, the judge ruled that as it had been a partnership instituted with the object of perpetrating a fraud neither party to it could expect the State to protect him. The plaintiff was thereupon non-suited.

There was also some humour, but of a grimmer variety, in the trick a couple of Frenchmen exploited in rural France and Germany thirty years ago. Posing as doctors they toured the villages, discreetly announcing that they were prepared to maim temporarily any young man about to be called to the Colours who did not wish to be



"Now and again a second-hand bookseller is imposed upon by a plausible rascal, who picks up a volume from the outside stall and sells it inside for a few shillings to its owner."

passed for service. They guaranteed to return six months later and for the balance of their fee restore to perfect health the rejected conscript, and the credulous peasants paid fifty francs down, or, in the case of Germans, two hundred marks, submitted to the "operation," which was generally the breaking of the bone of the trigger-finger of the right hand, and endured the pain with stoicism, believing that a few months after they had been rejected by the Army doctors their benefactors would reappear and put them right again. Their simple faith was confirmed by the fact that each of them had promised to pay another fee for the cure. But, of course, the so-called doctors never came back and the fools were crippled for life. Some of them had been lamed and several deaths resulted from the clumsiness of the scoundrels, but they were never captured, although several of their imitators later on were.

Another tour of a couple of rogues must be recorded because of its uniqueness. Arriving in India with a trunk-load of impressive-looking parchment certificates, each purporting to be issued by the "Senate of the University of the United States," two Yankees proceeded to sell the degrees of Master of Arts, Doctor of Divinity, Doctor of Laws, and Doctor of Science to those natives who were ambitious of academic honours. As the pedlars were willing to accept any price they could get, it frequently happened that a semi-nude Hindu had the degree of D.D. conferred on him for a couple of rupees, and towards the close of the tour the speculators rewarded efficient hotel

servants by making them M.A.'s or D.D.'s on the spot and for nothing! They returned home with a considerable fortune, but if anyone is inclined to laugh at the *naïveté* of the native he had better remember that many whites have been deceived in the same manner. A famous Nonconformist divine styled himself "Dr." for many years until a lawsuit revealed the interesting fact that the "university" which had conferred it on him had never known any alumni except five small negro orphans! "See that man," whispered a choleric clergymen during a ceremony at York Cathedral, indicating the reverend gentleman who was reading the lesson for the day, "he's wearing a bogus hood—he's a living lie." "Hush," said his companion, Magee, the famous Archbishop, as if gently deprecating such strong language; "say, rather, a falsehood."

But selling Latin "tags" inscribed on parchment to the heathen is easy work compared with selling to a presumably cute trader what is already his own property. Now and again a busy second-hand bookseller is imposed upon by a plausible rascal, who picks up a volume from the outside stall and sells it inside the shop for a few shillings to its owner. There is a story to the effect that one of these thieves took a rare first edition from the doorway shelf of a shop and obtained fifteen pounds for it. This was a *tour de force*, but the rogue's glib tongue worked the trick successfully. The same volume had been priced twenty pounds, and the amateur dealer insisted on receiving his price when the bookseller had offered him ten pounds.

"I have another copy of that edition and I'm asking only twenty for it," he pointed out.

"Quite so," said the stranger, promptly, "but I examined your copy a moment ago and it is not in such fine condition as this." He got his fifteen pounds, and when later the fraud was discovered and the ferret-eyed youngster who had been on guard all day outside the shop was asked if he had seen the stranger pick up the rare book he declared he had.

"I watched him," said the youth, "and when after talking to you for several minutes he came out without it, I thought you had refused an offer from him to buy it."

That criminal certainly had nerve, and there was more skill in his swindle than in all the plans of the Bidwell Gang, although the latter netted many thousands of pounds by their forgeries of letters of credit. As a rule, however, the bigger the crime the less original it is. Great crimes are usually the result of hard work and organization. They collapse and are detected when the participants grow careless or lose their heads. I remember a trial at the Old Bailey which concerned the leader of a band of criminals and their organizer, the latter a doctor. He planned and carried out with the aid of his confederates a score of profitable ventures in crime, and if it had not been for a mistake by one of his subordinates, the doctor would never have appeared in the dock to receive sentence of seven years' penal servitude. He had sent a couple of his men to cash a forged cheque for a large sum on a Leeds bank, and they employed the porter at their hotel to take it to the bank. They followed him at a discreet distance, prepared to fly if he was detained, and when after five long minutes' steady watch on the door of the bank he failed to reappear they decided the forgery had been detected and they took the next train to London. But they were mistaken. The cheque had been cashed at sight and the porter had duly left the bank by another door. Now the confederates had not known that there was a second exit—hence their flight—and when the money was not claimed at the hotel it was handed to the manager, who returned it to the bank, and then, of course, the truth came out, inquiries were made, and the doctor, a veritable Moriarty of crime, was arrested.

SAWARD, the barrister who is known in criminal history as "Jim the Penman," invented a plan for obtaining specimens of the signatures of persons who were accustomed to drawing cheques for big amounts. He was aware that very often the head of an important firm will sign his letters one way and his cheques another, and, consequently, examples of the former were of no use. But Saward's ingenious brain solved the difficulty in this manner. A friend of his would call on a prominent solicitor and instruct him to sue a "Mr. Vernon" for a debt of thirty pounds, and the lawyer having written a peremptory letter demanding a settlement, "Mr. Vernon" would send the amount, leaving the solicitor to deduct his costs and hand a cheque for the balance to his client, and thus the expert forger would be left in possession of a model to copy from when he wished to forge the lawyer's signature to a cheque for a large amount. It is hardly necessary to mention that the client and "Mr. Vernon" were one and the same person. Strangely enough, the first time this trick was put in operation the unsuspicious solicitor paid his client in cash, having that morning received a considerable sum in notes and gold. But ever afterwards it worked according to plan, and, until the silly blunder at Yarmouth which led to the discomfiture of Saward and his associates, it yielded huge profits.

"NEVER STOP—NEVER GIVE UP!"

by

EDISON MARSHALL

ILLUSTRATED BY W·R·S·STOTT

I.

THERE is but one passenger train a day plying on the branch line to City-of-Lakes. Like the water-fowl to the marshes, it arrives in the early night and departs in early morning. To-night it was late.

It was snowing—white, soft, wet flakes that smother a wind-shield and fill the eyes. The drifts would be deep before morning. But the passengers on the train weren't worrying about this fact. They were warm and snug and companionable in the close air of the three day-coaches.

There was a sleeping-car behind; but it was a curious fact that it was almost empty. It was not that these travellers could not afford its use. Many of them had ranches that a fast horseman, riding all day, could not encircle. But the sleeping-car, to their eyes, was rather cold and formal, and all these people—good friends of one another, if not by previous acquaintance, by the frontier comradeship of the journey—were making a sort of "sociable" out of their homecoming. They passed round their lunches and their stories; and if the air was close they breathed it and didn't mind.

There were, however, two men sitting in the smoking compartment of the sleeper. They had no place in the friendly company in the coaches in front. A glance would have revealed them as men of the great Outside world—Eastern men of a certain type—and they didn't make a habit of striking up acquaintance with fellow-passengers.

No one could have looked at them and doubted that they were successful men, possibly men of position and wealth. Yet there was no vulgar display; they would have been as intolerant of that as of the fraternization in the day-coaches.

Both were in the prime of life. Bronough, the more slender of the two, was touched with grey at the temples, but evidently prematurely. Bishop, however, except for the extra flesh on his formidable body, was not touched with any mark of age. It would be hard to guess his weight. He was six feet tall, with broad shoulders and a wrestler's neck—and prosperity had added fifty pounds to an already powerful frame. There had been labourers in plenty among his antecedents; forgotten or unreverenced as they were, they had bequeathed him a physical hardihood. He had a rather handsome face, and its only defect would not be noticed at the first glance. It was just a hint of brutality about the heavy jaws and the thick lips. He sat with eyes straight ahead. Bronough, evidently a subordinate, watched him attentively.

"Why should a man like Austin retire to these wilds for a full month in the holiday season?" Bishop demanded, irritably. "Even by hiring the launch to-night, this adventure is going to cost us three days."

"But they won't be lost, if Austin comes

through," Bronough returned. "He's one of those Nature-lovers, I suppose. They say John Austin, senior, put the cost of a steam yacht into this shooting-bungalow of his on the lake shore. And now his son comes up every year for the December shooting."

Bishop grunted. "At least we can be glad that it's the son, and not the old man, that we have to do business with. John Austin, senior, would crimp this deal of ours at the first glance—if he were alive. He had the eye of a hawk."

"But you've never met this son of his," Bronough suggested. "He's got the old man's blood in him."

"I've never met him, but I know. He's not naturally suspicious. Millionaire's sons never are—and the dynasty has come to him without effort on his part. No one but old Austin himself could have seen round the corner in this affair of ours. Look how it went by the Seats of the Mighty in the Capital—it's beautiful, Bronough! It cheers me up every time I think of it."

"That they should be so blind——"

"There's absolutely no loophole for Austin and his friends to see what's behind it. The only way they could know is by the *feel*—if you know what I mean. It would have to be an instinct, not just sharp business sense—something the older Austin had, but in all probability his son hasn't. To-morrow night at this time we'll have his signature, and the thing will be done."

The great form sank lower in the seat. His voice, rising for a moment in enthusiasm, had lowered again until it was almost guttural. He had been told that John Austin, junior, was a kindly, companionable sort, and that the Bishop project would pass his inspection just as it had that of his subordinates. He didn't stop to think that the very love of the marshes and the lakes that brought the young millionaire across the continent every winter must imply some hardihood of spirit. Soft men do not love the wastes, the whirling snows, and the icy winds.

BISHOP had no more closely guarded secret than his own humble origin. Yet in his mind he held no high opinion of the business force and ability of the second generation of wealth. Young Austin would fail to see the real truth—that by his signature on a certain little document Bishop had drawn up a whole valley of humble farmers would be brought face to face with ruin. It was just a little matter of a right-of-way and an irrigation canal—and at the outset it seemed thoroughly benevolent and legitimate. And, in truth, the deal was wholly inside the law. Bishop had not the least intention of crossing that rather variable barrier.

Bishop looked forward with no joy to the three-hour ride in the launch over the wintry lake. Men were fools who took their holidays in such a wilderness as this—cold and snow and desolate marshes. Such fools would not see quickly into the "joker" in the Bishop project.

The train drew into City-of-Lakes; and Captain McTavish was waiting in a car. He was a dour Scotchman, muscular and stolid, and he had asked a rather fancy figure for the conveyance of these two up to Austin's lodge in his launch, the *Mallard*. "We'll whirl over to the landing-stage and get started right away," the Scotchman told them. "And the yacht won't cost ye so much, either. I've got another passenger."

"You've already promised him?" Bishop demanded.

"Yes; but I'm sure you wouldn't mind. There's plenty of room, and I thought both of you and he would appreciate the saving of making one trip. He lives up on the Bay and was down on business. He's a nice fellow to travel with, too."

"It's all right this time—but I'd consider it a favour if you'd let us know in advance, another time, whom you intend to take along as guests when we engage your launch."

For once the good manners that Bishop had so laboriously acquired had deserted him, and the Scotchman knew it. He opened his mouth to speak, then turned silently to the wheel. Of course, Bishop was not really displeased. The saving of hiring the launch was something. He was not really afraid that the presence of one of the humble wilderness men would interfere with his comfort or grate on his sensibilities. Rather it was just the exercise of a habit he had acquired of insisting upon deference and recognition of his own prominence.

He glanced only once at the slender, brown-skinned man—evidently, from his rough dress, a worker from one of the lumber camps on the far shore—who was waiting in the cabin when he entered. His glance was not in answer to the look of friendliness with which the young man had greeted him. It was one of Bishop's boasts that he chose his friends with care—that he established no intimacy with fellow-passengers on his many journeys.

Even in the shelter of the cabin they could hear the beat of the waves against the reeds. It was a peculiar sound, never to be forgotten. No stars gleamed in the dark waters. And the wilderness wind swept into them and brought its chill and its menace. Then the boat pushed out into the lake.

II.

IT was almost a deserted place. In summer, certain wise men came from all points of the compass to fish in it—taking therefrom as large a breed of rainbow trout as any angler ever dreamed about on midsummer night. There were many cottages on the wooded portions of the shore, and the varied craft on its blue waters made it seem quite gay. In the autumn men came to hunt the water-fowl that passed ever up and down its marshy shores. But as the autumn grew to late winter human beings visited it less and less. In the first place, its winds were bitter cold, and the fingers grew too stiff to press a trigger. Besides, its waters usually froze over in the last days of November.

It is true that in some years the lake had remained open all the winter. In the season that Bishop came to talk to Austin about his project the ice was unusually late. It had formed a thin crust on the various bays and inlets, yet the great wind-swept expanse was still clear. But except for the water-fowl and an occasional hardy trapper or lumberjack on its farthest shores, it was utterly deserted. Weeks would pass without the sight of a single craft.

THERE was but a cap o' wind when Captain McTavish started his motor. The soft snow was still sifting down and a keener wind was promised before he could reach the bay; but the captain had perfect confidence in his little launch.

But for very good reason he didn't head out into the open lake. Only by following the shore line could directions be kept at all. There were no stars to guide him and compasses were of little value either. Cruising these waters was a matter of long experience and at least a superficial knowledge of the shallows; and Captain McTavish did not dare to go too close to the margin. He did not in the least care to run aground in this lonely region.

The three men moved almost at once into the engine-room, taking the harder seats beside the motor. It was warmer here. Bishop's temperature was falling with the thermometer. He was chill and uncomfortable, and perhaps he had already begun to regret his insistence that Captain McTavish should take him at once to Austin's bungalow instead of waiting for the dawn. Bronough's moods were always almost perfectly in tune with his chief's, and he sat scowling at the palpitating valves. Only the third of the trio, the Stranger, seemed unaffected by the discomfort. One would have almost thought, by the curious glisten in his straightforward eyes, that he was enjoying this wintry ride.

An hour passed, and the snow seemed to be ceasing. Once or twice they caught glimpses of a single cold white star in a break in the clouds.

They turned a point, and the wind smote them. The shore seemed suddenly very close. Their light was no longer impeded by the fall of snowflakes, and they saw the wall of reeds streaming in the wind. "We're too near to the shore," the Stranger called to the captain.

The occasional word addressed to him by either Bishop or Bronough had apparently gone unheard; but the captain called an answer to the Stranger: "I know it, but the water's deeper here. I'll head out."

They felt the lurch of the launch as it headed into the wind. Then all of them found themselves upon their feet.

It would be hard to explain the sudden sense of alarm that they all experienced. The only outward sign of trouble was a sudden racing of the engine; but only an experienced yachtsman would have seen immediately the significance of that. The three passengers certainly had no time to reason out the explanation of the sudden roar of the cylinders. Rather it seemed to be a contagion of alarm from the one man who did realize what had happened—Captain McTavish.

The boat wallowed drunkenly, and the captain wrenched at his wheel. The ship turned three slow circles, and the muck grated beneath her keel. The engine choked and died.

At first the only sensation was one of silence, that the sound of the wind in the reeds could not alleviate. It seemed as if the air had suddenly grown quiet. In reality, the storm was beating just as violently as before, but at the very edge of the reeds, in three inches of water, they were sheltered from it. The boat stood quite still.

"Well, Captain?" the Stranger asked.

"The propeller-shaft is broken," was the answer. "We're stranded—miles from nowhere. We'll have to cross the marsh."

Bishop cursed in the darkness—savage, blasphemous curses of annoyance and anger. He foresaw several hours more of cold and discomfort, and possibly a tiresome walk to shelter. But he did not know the marshes. He would have been silent and awed as a little child if he had known—as the Stranger and McTavish knew—and if he had understood the real nature of the test that lay before them.

III.

FOR a moment the Stranger and Captain McTavish talked with low voices at the foot of the little ladder that led to the bridge. They talked so quietly that Bishop and Bronough could not hear what they said. It is a trait learned on the trail to be very cool and self-possessed in a moment of danger.

Voices fall instead of rise. Bishop heard the murmur of their voices, and was suspicious at once.

"Talk up, you two," he commanded, "or else go to work to get us out of here. I've paid my money for you to take me to my destination——"

He had forgotten that he wasn't addressing his own chauffeur. The two talked on as if they hadn't heard him. Bronough stood behind his chief, seemingly of little more substance than his own shadow. But he did find strength to echo his words. "Hurry up, and let's get out of here," he said, lamely.

The captain looked over his shoulder. "You won't get out of here to-night," he said, quite clearly.

Bishop tried to answer, but only curses came first. "Do you mean that?" he demanded. "Do you mean that you took me up here in a boat that wasn't seaworthy, and we'll have to lay here till morning? You said we could cross the marsh. Well, let's get started. I'm not sure that it isn't a put-up job."

The captain turned. "And what possible value would it be to me to put up a job like this?"

"Who knows? But I've got to get to the Bay to-night, and if you can't make this boat run, I want you to say so."

"That's easy," the Stranger replied. "It won't run."

"Then I'm going to start to walk across."

"Help yourself," the captain urged him. "You might step out in the reeds and see how easy it is."

BISHOP stepped over the side, sinking at once into the deep snow and the muck beneath. He snatched frantically at the side of the craft, and drew himself back on board. "Good lord," he exclaimed, "we can't walk in that!"

The Stranger seemed to smile—very quietly. "Listen, sir," he said, quite courteously. "I think I'd better explain this situation to you. First tell me—how deep is the snow?"

"Deep? It's up to my hips!"

"No, it's not! It's not even two feet, I think; but the marsh is beneath. Our propeller-shaft, as you know, is broken. It can't be repaired until a boat comes out to us. I want you to realize how we're placed. And no boat is coming out to rescue us until we reach a telephone and tell them to."

"Then let's get to a 'phone——"

"You're not within miles of one, sir. You probably don't know that this lake is utterly deserted in the winter. No one—except an occasional lumberman—comes or goes at all." He suddenly whirled to the dark Scot behind him. "Captain, how long would it be before your wife becomes worried about you and sends someone out to look for you?"

"About a week, and maybe more," he returned. "I told her I was going to stay until Mr. Bishop was ready to return, and of course I didn't know when that would be."

"No one will come to look for me, either. I told the men that I might stay several days in City-of-Lakes. And, sir"—he turned again to Bishop—"have you any idea what would happen to us inside of a week?"

"We'd starve, of course. But, why——"

"Please wait a minute. We'd starve, of course. But men can last several days without food if they can keep warm. But we couldn't keep warm. It's cold now. It will be colder in the dawn. There is no fuel in these marshes—no hopes of building a fire. By sitting close we wouldn't die to-night. Some of us would last over to-morrow night. But men can't survive this winter cold for many nights. Only one thing remains, and I think that there's no question about it. That is, to take our chances, and plough off through this snow and marsh to the edge of Vacation Creek. I won't tell you how far it is—for you wouldn't have heart to attempt it in this snow. But it's all a man, any man, can manage, without food and warmth and rest. It will take every ounce of strength each one of us has got."

"I don't believe it. It's a hold-up of some sort."

"Believe it or not, as you want to—but I know this lake, and so does the captain. Vacation Creek isn't a stream to jump over. It's two hundred yards wide, and there's no way round it. Beyond that creek are bungalows where we can find food and warmth—just on the other side. And maybe there will be a way to cross. We'll pray that there is. It's going to be a test, and only a chance of reaching it. The light burns from the magneto, so we can't take it. And you might as well make yourself as comfortable as you can until dawn."

"Good heavens! Can't we reach it in the dark?"

The Stranger studied the sky. "The clouds seem to be breaking—if I can find any familiar stars, we can start. But we can't find our way without pilots—as long as the clouds remain I can't see even the outline of any of the landmarks. Captain McTavish is going to try to start the engine to keep us warm, but he's afraid that some of the water plants have got into its vitals."

They stood silent while the captain was working with his motor. He worked long and tirelessly before he could even get an explosion out of it; and it stopped again

"'Take hold of my hand!' the Stranger commanded swiftly. 'We've got to make a chain.'"

and again. The wind was lowering; but the chill that it brought gave way to an actual lowering of the temperature far below the freezing point. Their bodies were already unpleasantly cold. And now, long past midnight, the clouds were breaking and dissolving.

" This won't do," the Stranger said at last. " We're all too cold, and we're wasting precious strength. We're wasting time, too —because this walk across the marsh is really a race against time. I can keep my directions now, and I think we'd better start." He glanced up at McTavish with curious interest. " Captain, haven't you any more clothes than that ? " he demanded.

" Not another thing. I thought I had a top-coat in the engine-room, but I guess my wife forgot to put it in."

" Good heavens, man ! that complicates matters worse than ever. Then that settles it—we've got to start this minute. Get up, Bishop."

" Look here ! " Bishop suddenly leaned forward. " I'm not used to being directed by the first lumberjack I come across. Besides, I've hired this launch, and Captain McTavish is in my employ. You're a kind of interloper on this trip, anyway—and I'm going to wait here till morning."

" Suit yourself—just as long as you give the captain one of your under-coats."

" What ! " The great face grew savage. " One of my coats ! "

" I think it would be only right. That fur coat of yours alone is warmer than everything the captain has on. I know that you have at least a business coat and waistcoat under it. I have only this one coat and shirt. Your friend, Bronough, can't spare any of his clothes, either. So if I were you I'd do it."

Bishop stood up. " If it wasn't for the position we're in, we'd settle that insolence now. I think you'll pay for it, anyway, if I have any influence with your boss. I'm going to keep my coats. If the captain didn't bring along enough to keep him warm, it's his own fault."

" That's all right, sir." The captain addressed the Stranger: " Let him keep his coats. I'll manage all right by walking fast. And now let's start."

" You're going to leave your boat ? " Bronough demanded.

" Yes."

" Then we'd better go with him," Bronough urged his employer. " We'll freeze to death before they can get across and come and save us."

The Stranger and the captain didn't seem to be listening. They had crawled out into the deep, cold snow, and were studying the patches of starlight. The clouds were swiftly receding and the moon was rising. With bad grace, Bishop and Bronough followed them.

" Straight toward the North Star," the Stranger advised. " And, Captain, you've been working with the engine. I'll break the trail first."

So he headed away into the snowdrifts of the marsh, and three silent men followed him in file. In the emptiness and stillness they were as lonely figures as the stars that guided them.

IV.

EVEN Bishop—who took the last and easiest place in the short file—had some knowledge of the marshes before the first mile was past. Walking is ordinarily almost automatic. No. thought is given to the placing of one foot before another. But here, every step was a distinct and exhausting effort. The snow was deep and wet and clinging, and it had matted in the tall reeds of the marsh until it required all one's physical strength to push through. Yet they could not stop and rest. The grim spirit of the cold seemed to be waiting, hovering, for just such an opening as this.

The long moments dragged away; and they could not seem to gain. They had to make long detours. Sometimes the mire gave way beneath them, and they got used to the Stranger's quick, decisive command to " back-trail."

Soon something worse than cold had begun to oppress them. Cold can be mastered, for a little while at least. As long as their bodily effort continued, as long as the vital forces of the body were not utterly exhausted, they could keep from freezing to death.

But now the wisest of them all, particularly McTavish, had begun to feel the first dreadful weight of despair. If one thing was needed to bring them through, it was hope and courage. And now both of these were breaking.

Their clothes were soaking wet half way up their thighs. Sometimes the reeds tripped them, and they fell sprawling in the snow; but they knew enough to spring quickly to their feet. Wet clothes, in their present predicament, would be the last thing needed to defeat them. And after the first hour, McTavish saw that the Stranger's falls occurred at ever-increasing intervals.

The fact had a grim significance. There is no worse sign than this. It revealed the beginning of utter fatigue—when the nerves lose their control over the muscles. Once more he fell sprawling; then McTavish passed over him. " I'm going to break trail a while," he said.

The first ribbon of light was showing in the east, and they were entering upon the

coldest hour of the day. McTavish alone, however, was visibly weakened by the cold. The frost pierced his civilian coat and soft flannel shirt, and even the plunging advance through the drifts could not keep him warm.

Curiously, Bishop was still at the end of the file. All the shiftings in leadership had not lost him that position. He had suffered less than any of the others. He was dressed more warmly, for one thing—and the trail was always fairly well broken by the three men in front. Yet he was the only one that opened his lips to curse at the cold and the marsh.

"A wintry day," McTavish predicted to the Stranger. He glanced up at the deepening clouds. "As bad a day as we've ever seen. I'm afraid we haven't much chance."

But there was no unusual emphasis in his words. He spoke very quietly—not half so loud as Bishop cursed.

"Carry on!" the Stranger answered grimly. His lips drew in a half smile.

In the grey uncertain light of dawn, they had their first crisis. Bronough was leading, and in the silence the others heard the sharp crack of ice beneath his feet. It was the moment the Spirit of the Marsh had waited for—Bronough called sharply in warning, then tried to turn. Then they saw his grey shape as he struggled and sank in the mire.

Just for an instant the Stranger, who was next to him, stopped in his tracks. He understood perfectly: Bronough had walked into one of the treacherous quagmire pools, whose muck is almost as deadly as any quicksand. It seizes on the legs and holds them, and only aid from without can break its grasp. Struggling only makes its grip the tighter, for no other reason than the lack of traction. The wise thing to do is stand still, whereupon one will sink only to the hips. And then the proper course is simply to wait—to see whether the cold or a search party will be the first to come.

The instant's pause revealed to the Stranger the unpleasant fact that he, also, was in the quagmire. It was true that the pool grew steadily worse the farther one entered it; yet the muck gave way beneath his feet and he sank to his knees. Captain McTavish had crossed the interval between them, and they stood quite still, close together. Bishop was still on firm ground.

"Take hold of my hand!" the Stranger commanded swiftly. "We've got to make a chain."

Then they plunged on, into the quaking mire. The Stranger whipped off his coat, and together they fought their way near enough to throw the end of it into Bronough's outstretched arms.

They had three links in the chain, but yet another would be needed before they could break the grasp of the mire. The Stranger's face was curiously set as he turned. Something like a white flame, not seen before, was in his eyes and on his cheeks.

His voice had a singular clarity and distinctness when he spoke to Bishop.

"Wade farther into the pond," he said, "and take the captain's hand."

Bishop cursed at him in reply. "Aren't three of you enough?" he demanded. "You fools—wading in to sink yourself. I'm going to get help."

"Let go of my hand," the Stranger said in a strange, tired, quiet voice. The captain released it, and it looked white and slim as it went back to the man's hip. It brought out a long, black-barreled revolver.

He didn't seem to be aiming it. He held it easily. Yet its barrel was pointed inexorably at the heavy form at the edge of the pond. "Wade on in," he said in the same subdued voice. "I couldn't miss at this distance, and if we're going to die here, you're going with us."

Snarling, Bishop waded in, and they made a chain that fought its way to the shore.

V.

A WINTRY day—and four strange figures filing through the marshes. They seemed no longer conscious of time. They were fighting for their lives; and that was the only issue. They headed straight toward the top of a round hill—a pilot to take the place of the stars that had faded.

There had been a little drama when the first three men of the file had halted, insisting that Bishop take his turn at breaking the trail. Again the Stranger's eyes had a white light; and Bishop had read its meaning. But he soon professed fatigue, and dropped back. The other three did not ask him again.

Noon came, and then the deepening chill of early afternoon. They had reached the crisis. Two of the four were at the utmost limit of endurance, only a shred of their last reserve strength kept them up at all. One of these was Captain McTavish. He had taken more than his share of trail-breaking; besides, he was the oldest of the four and past his prime.

Bronough, of light frame and of mediocre physique, was the other. Bishop was freshest of all. He lost none of his vivacity from cold. He was naturally strong, and he had shirked his share of file leading. The Stranger was keeping himself going on his nerves, but they were even more to be relied upon than strong muscles. He was one of those rare men whose very spirit seems to have wings to bear them along after

the body is impotent. It bore on the others too.

"Fight on," he whispered again to McTavish. "We can't stop now, old friend. It isn't many miles to the creek."

"And when we reach the creek? What then? No sound will carry to the bungalow, and the ice won't bear you up."

"Never stop—never give up!" the Stranger said. The words were not addressed to any being but his own spirit. The tone was heavy and dull and strange. They were almost at the end of the trail.

They fell quite often now. It was always a fresh battle to get up. It was so pleasant to lie still and forget—but always the Stranger called. One couldn't forget the blue pistol he carried in his pocket. They thought that the man would turn it even on those that could no longer walk, to make them rise again. Once the Stranger had to stagger back and jerk Bronough to his feet.

"Just a little way farther," he promised; "we're almost at the creek."

HE spoke the truth. Even now they were descending to the margin. Just beyond it lay shelter and warmth and food, in the bungalow far out of shouting range on the hillside; but as yet they were not to know whether they were ever to reach them.

Life itself hung on the balance. Their exhausted bodies could never endure another night on the marsh. The creek was really a still strait, nearly two hundred yards across at its narrowest place, and it was too deep to wade. Each man had in his heart the hope that some one of the other three still had strength for the long swim across, knowing that he himself could not possibly achieve it.

They staggered down to the creek-edge, and the bravest of them tried to smile as he looked across. Seemingly the Spirit of the Marsh had cheated them, after all. They had battled its snows and passed its quagmires—and now they were seemingly to die at the very edge of its domain. For, sheltered from the winds, the waterway was crusted with thin ice.

It was true that there was open water a mile below them, but at that point the bay was far too wide for an exhausted man to swim. In the space between, the ice had gradually increased in thickness. Some of it was floating like thin glass, and just in front it made a clear white surface completely across the strait. And then the Stranger saw their last hope.

"It won't hold up a man walking," he said quietly. "Farther down, where the ice is in patches, it's too wide for any man to swim—exhausted as we are. There are boats in plenty across at the empty cabins. There's just one thing left—one of us has got to try to crawl across on his hands and knees."

The captain understood at once, and perhaps the other two had some small measure of understanding. Ice that will not support a walking figure will often hold up one that lies flat.

"And the one to cross," said Captain McTavish, "will be me. I'm the oldest man here—with less to lose."

"No, you haven't strength left to row back. Unless Bishop wants to go——?" The Stranger looked, with curling lips, at the great figure of the instigator of the Bishop project.

"I'm heavier than you," he returned. "It's up to you or Bronough."

"Not Bronough—he's too worn out, too. You see whom that leaves, Captain!"

"I see!" And McTavish turned and cursed the man who had hired him—black and bitter curses, such as Bishop had never had to listen to before.

"I'm the one," the Stranger said again. The bitter smile faded, and for an instant the mouth gave a curious impression of boyishness and appeal. It was even possible that he smiled a little, too, only in a different way—a grim, strange way. "And wish me luck, McTavish. I'd just as soon drown out there in those waters as freeze here, so I really don't mind going at all. And keep moving until I get back."

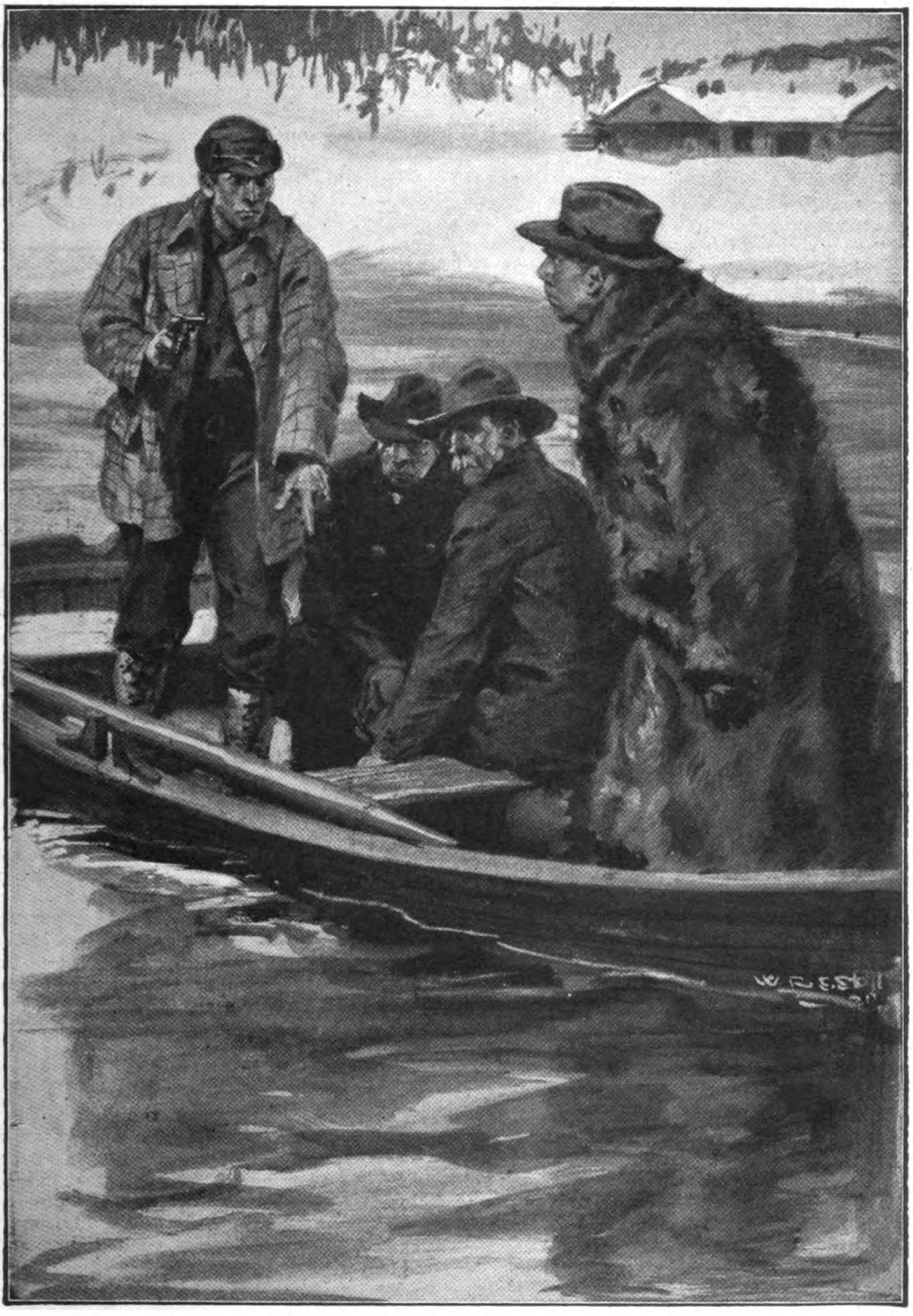
There was no handshaking, no emotionalism. Issues were revealed, life or death by the turn of a hair. A man had seen his work, and he bent to do it. They saw him slip down, almost flat upon the ice. Then they saw him push out.

With starting, straining eyes they watched his dark figure against the white—ever creeping toward the safety that lay beyond. Sometimes the ice cracked and swayed under him, and often he halted, to creep on inch by inch. He seemed just a speck on the limitless white.

Then the captain and Bronough shouted and danced like madmen in the snow. Their straining eyes saw him pass the last fifty feet in safety, and crawl up upon the shore.

But the little drama of the marsh was not yet completed. A short wait, easily endured because they knew that help was coming, and then they saw the Stranger emerging from one of the little outbuildings beside the bungalow on the hillside. They were too far to see him thrust two dark bottles into his pockets.

He hurried down the shore to the open water, then leaped into one of the line of boats. His oars flashed as he rowed swiftly across. They hurried up the widening strait to meet him.



"The Stranger's revolver leaped forth and pointed. 'Get into that seat, you mongrel!' he said. 'I'd kill you as I would a dog.'"

"I brought two drinks for the men that need them most," he said as he came up. His eyes were straight on Bishop's. "The Chinese cook at the bungalow made them for me in the quickest time a man ever worked. It's hot water with a drop of whisky. I had one over there, and these are for the captain and Bronough."

He passed one of the bottles to each of the two men he had named. "You've left me out!" Bishop shouted.

"You've been left out on things all day—including trail. breaking," was the reply. "Drink 'em down, you two—to the last drop. And all you can't drink I'll take myself."

They drank the bracing liquid; then climbed into the boat. The load was heavy, but the still water prevented any danger of capsizing. Bishop settled himself in the bow. The captain started to take the oars.

"There's just one more thing," the Stranger went on. He spoke with a curious intentness they had not heard before. "That's not your seat, Captain. Bishop—sit back and take the oars."

The man looked up with a snarl. "That's too much," he said. "You had it your own way out there. But we're nearing civilization now, almost to my friend John Austin's bungalow. You've just had two drinks prepared by his cook. I tell you——"

The Stranger's eyes suddenly blazed up. There was none of the cool good-humour in them now. It was an explosion at last, a silent one but no less terrible because of its silence. Bishop met the eyes and read their meaning.

His eyes dropped to the Stranger's hand, but they were hardly fast enough to follow it as it whipped back to his hip. The revolver leaped forth and pointed.

"Get into that seat, you mongrel!" the Stranger commanded swiftly. "I'd kill you as I would a dog."

He meant what he said. The old murder-light was in the grey eyes. Bishop's eyes stared, but his motions were swift. He took the seat and bent to the oars.

It was a long, hard row back around the sheaths of ice. The boat was heavily laden, and riding low. He did not have the stimulant by aid of which the Stranger had rowed across. And he was chattering and black with wrath when he reached the other side.

"I'll show you, you blackguard!" he shouted. "I'll get even with you—and I'll have witnesses, too. You drew a deadly weapon, and I'll enlist John Austin's aid."

The captain smiled, hardly perceptibly.

"I'm going to see him now; he lives in the bungalow where you got the whisky. I've come up on a business deal, and he'll help me. Who are you, you blackguard? I'm Gabriel Bishop——"

He halted, sputtering; and the captain's smile was a trifle more discernible. "You're mistaken in one thing," the Stranger replied. "You said you had business with John Austin. You haven't any business with him, and you never will have any business with him."

Bishop gazed at him in sudden horror. "Who are you," he asked, hoarsely.

"I'm John Austin," was the reply.

The captain slapped his thighs and roared with Olympian laughter.

THUS the farmers of the Little Valley were never to know the menace of the Bishop project, after all. The trail was the test, and it showed what all the close scrutiny of his documents did not show—the streak of decay in the man's nature. The Spirit of the Marsh had done a good work, after all.

Next Month:

CONAN DOYLE

at his best.

A GREAT BOXING STORY.

A DILEMMA IN MORALS

by

F·BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY S.SEYMOUR LUCAS

THE sharp summons of the desk-telephone disturbed the austere quiet of that inner sanctum where the head of the firm of Armitage and Armitage deliberated upon the manifold difficulties which clients bring to their family lawyer. With calm precision, Mr. Armitage laid down the typescript folio he was perusing and reached for the receiver.

"Yes?—Mr. Frank Steynson?" The habitually restrained mouth in the keen old face smiled an unconscious welcome. "Yes—by appointment—quite right. I'm expecting him. Show him in, will you, please?"

A moment later he rose from his seat, with a genuine cordiality, to greet the alertly buoyant, well-dressed young man of about thirty years who entered.

"Come right in, Frank," he said, in hearty invitation. "What's the trouble? Nothing serious, I'm sure."

"Troubles!" echoed the young man, with a cheerfully scornful laugh. "I haven't a trouble in the world! Just the contrary—I can't think what I've done to deserve my good fortune!"

The old man smiled at him, forbearing with professional discretion to probe the reason for this unwonted exuberance.

"Well," he said, kindly, "I think you have reason to be satisfied with your lot in life, Frank. To be head at your age of a great financial corporation——"

"Pooh!" replied Steynson, disdainfully. "The Transatlantic Trust! My father did all that. God bless him! I just stepped into his shoes. No, Mr. Armitage, it is for an achievement of my own that I want your congratulations."

"Your credit-stabilization scheme?" hazarded Mr. Armitage. "Don't be too reckless, my boy. Great as your resources are——"

"That's put through—finished!" the young man interrupted him. "We're allied with one of the biggest Paris houses. Once the crop movements are over we've nothing to fear. That's all attended to. I'd almost forgotten it." He smiled reassurance at the old lawyer. "No, Mr. Armitage. I haven't come to be congratulated on a business deal. Guess again! Something that really matters to me—the man, *me*—not the dehumanized figure-head of the Transatlantic Trust!"

"You are no figure-head, Frank," demurred Mr. Armitage. "But that is evidently not the topic. You excite my curiosity. Out with it, boy!"

"I'm going to marry!"

The old man's face lit up with genuine pleasure.

"I am delighted to hear it, Frank! And I am sure in advance that the choice of my old friend's son will be a matter for the heartiest of congratulations."

"She is the best woman in the world!" the young man assured him, enthusiastically.

"That's the spirit! Sit down and tell me all about it." Mr. Armitage set the example by himself resuming his seat. He leaned back in his chair, finger-tips in juxtaposition, awaiting the young man's further confidence. "I can't tell you how glad I am to hear it, Frank," he said, with a benevolent solicitude that was almost paternal. "A man of your spirit wants a good woman to steady him—particularly in your position——"

The young man laughed as though accepting the implied censure upon his past habits.

"I'm not putting up a brief for myself, Mr. Armitage; but I've at least learned to distinguish the real thing from the imitation. I have no illusions left."

"That is a hard saying, my boy. Life is very barren without illusions. And if I know your temperament——"

"I shall always cherish one—eh?" the young man completed the sentence.

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" I shall hope, at least, that you will always cherish an ideal," the old man corrected him.

" Well, Mr. Armitage, there's no illusion about this. It *is* the ideal ! " Young Steynson smiled in naive happiness. " There isn't a woman in the world that can hold a candle to her ! " he declared. " I could never have imagined that a woman could be, not only so brilliant and so beautiful, but so—so good ! " He finished with a genuine earnestness. " I tell you, Mr. Armitage, she has awakened me to meanings in life that I had never conceived. Everything apart from her seems paltry and mean—it *was* paltry and mean until I met her ! "

Mr. Armitage nodded his head in sympathetic comprehension.

" You leave me in no doubt as to the sincerity of your sentiments, my boy," he said, kindly. " And I am sure that their object is worthy of them. Have I the honour to know the lady ? "

" You know her name, anyway," replied the young man. He pronounced it with an evident certitude of its familiarity. " Miss Ella Forsdyke."

Mr. Armitage failed to exhibit the instantaneous recognition expected of him. " Miss Ella Forsdyke——" he repeated slowly, his brows wrinkling under his grey hair in an effort of memory that was patently fruitless.

" —of the Cosmopolis Theatre," added the young man in a tone that implied the superfluity of this conceded aid to recollection.

The old lawyer looked up quickly.

" An actress ! " he ejaculated.

" My dear Mr. Armitage," said Steynson, piqued by the involuntarily obvious disapproval of the old man's tone, " you surely are not so prejudiced as to believe that all actresses are — well, adventuresses ? Miss Forsdyke is a lady."

MR. ARMITAGE hastened to disclaim the suggestion.

" My dear Frank, I readily admit that many ladies upon the stage are an honour not only to their profession but to their sex. I confess, however, that I was a little surprised—it had not occurred to me that you would choose your wife in a *milieu* where " —he smiled with the faintest touch of irony —" you must already have experienced many disillusionments."

" I choose my wife, Mr. Armitage, when and wherever I find the woman who corresponds to my ideal," said the young man, with some asperity. " No matter what her environment."

" Quite, quite," the old lawyer soothed him. " You yourself are the only judge. No one has the least right to dictate to you. I hope with all my heart that you will be supremely happy."

" Never fear ! " said the young man. " I know the real thing when I meet it—I've had enough, more than enough, of the cheap make-believe. Mr. Armitage," he hesitated a moment, resumed in a graver tone, " every man, I suppose, meets his ideal incarnate once in his lifetime. I've met mine. It has changed the whole aspect of life for me. Existence *means* something now—something more than just piling up money, more than frittering away energies on the trivial amusements with which people disguise the emptiness of their lives. When I think of—of Ella, I get in touch with the big realities—you know what I mean ? I'm a clumsy hand at expressing the things that matter. I come out of the glare of the arc-lights and see the stars." He paused again, awkwardly conscious of the inadequacy of this expression of his deeper feelings. Mr. Armitage's sympathetic eyes encouraged him. " All my life, it seems to me, I have been unconsciously seeking for her—for just the woman that I know Ella to be. One can't put these things into words, but, if ever in your life you loved, Mr. Armitage, you know all it can mean to a man."

Mr. Armitage nodded assent, his grey eyes softening as if at some old personal reminiscence.

" I know, Frank," he said, simply.

" All that is good and true and noble in life is bound up with her, so far as I am concerned," continued the young man. " You hinted at disillusionment. If my belief in Ella is an illusion—then," he burst out with a sudden vehemence "—then the whole of life is a bitter mockery, and I'll sell my soul to any devil that will buy it ! "

" My dear Frank——" protested the old lawyer.

Steynson laughed at his own excessive emphasis, waved away the absurdity.

" But, of course, it is inconceivable," he said. " When you see her you will realize it. Whatever may be said of other women on the stage, there has never been a breath against Ella Forsdyke. She *is* just what I believe her to be—the straightest, truest, most lovable woman that ever a man took to be his wife ! "

" I don't doubt it, Frank," said Mr. Armitage, smilingly. " There is no need to defend your choice. The fact that it *is* your choice is sufficient for me."

" You will see her for yourself in a few minutes," said Steynson. " I arranged for her to meet me here. I want you to draw up a deed of settlement, Mr. Armitage. We are being married quietly next week. And when you know her," he smiled confidently,

" I haven't the least doubt that you will indeed congratulate me ! "

Mr. Armitage rose from his chair and held out his hand

" My dear Frank," he said, with some solemnity, " you have evidently found the woman who can bring out the best in my old friend's son—I won't dwell now on anxieties that I have felt, your wander-years are over —and I do here and now from the bottom of my heart most sincerely congratulate you ! "

Steynson took the old man's hand, pressed it in a silence that was appreciative of a concern which honoured him.

The bell of the desk-telephone rang sharply. Mr. Armitage picked up the receiver, listened, and turned to Steynson.

" Here is Miss Forsdyke," he said, with a smile which relegated their conversation to the limbo of things forgotten. He reverted to the instrument, spoke into it. " Yes—show the lady in, please ! " He turned again to Steynson. " Do you wish to discuss the details of the settlement in her presence, Frank ? "

" Certainly," replied the young man. " We have no secrets from each other."

THE door opened and Miss Forsdyke appeared. Mr. Armitage, turning to welcome her, made an involuntary little movement as if in surprise at this antithesis of the meretriciously golden-haired prettiness he had possibly imagined. Tall, dignified, dressed with a quiet elegance, this woman did not in any way correspond with the type of stage favourite in whose company young Frank Steynson had acquired a deplorable notoriety. Strikingly beautiful as she was—dark, with large eyes that opened in a fascinating candour of expression—her beauty was not that soulless felicity of form and feature which so frequently mocks the hungry soul of man. There was character in it, character which was emphasized by the native and unpretentious refinement of her bearing.

The young man's voice was eager with affectionate pride in her.

" Here you are, Ella ! " he said. " I want you to know my father's best friend—and mine—Mr. Armitage." He turned to the old lawyer. " My future wife, Mr. Armitage—Miss Forsdyke."

The old gentleman was a model of courteous urbanity as he shook hands.

" I am glad to meet you, Miss Forsdyke," he said. " Frank has been telling me about you. I congratulate you on the most genuinely enthusiastic of prospective husbands."

A flush of pleasure came into her somewhat pale face.

" Frank always exaggerates my virtues," she said, in smiling deprecation. " I am terrified lest the reality should disappoint him."

" No fear of that ! " chimed in the young man. " That's one thing I'm certain of—whoever disappoints me, it won't be you ! "

Mr. Armitage was gravity itself.

" A well-founded mutual confidence is the best guarantee for married happiness," he said, sententiously. " Will you not sit down, Miss Forsdyke ? I believe Frank wishes you to participate in a little business discussion which concerns you."

The three of them seated themselves, Mr. Armitage in his own chair, the others in proximity to his desk. The old lawyer placed a sheet of foolscap in readiness for his notes, and turned to the young woman.

" Frank is about to execute a deed of settlement upon you, Miss Forsdyke," he said, with legal solemnity. " You understand, of course, that it will only become operative upon your marriage. We will arrive presently at the amount your future husband proposes to allot you. I want now just to note down a few preliminary details. It is merely a question of establishing your identity beyond dispute—this is an uncertain world," he smiled at her in attenuation of any undue significance in his words, " and one must endeavour to foresee every eventuality. There is no legal document which is not liable to contestation. Would you mind giving me your place of birth and your father's full name ? " His eyes rested upon her in calm inquiry.

She coloured sharply, but, before she could reply, the sudden ring of the desk-telephone diverted the lawyer's attention. He took up the instrument, listened, and then passed it over to Steynson.

" This is a call for you, Frank," he said.

A frown came into the young man's face as he listened to the voice inaudible to his companions.

" Yes—yes—all right—I'll come at once ! " he said in answer. He put down the instrument and turned to the others.

" I must ask you to excuse me for a few minutes," he said, smiling over the worry in his face. " I am wanted urgently in the office. My car is outside. Wait for me, Ella. I shall be back inside a quarter of an hour."

Once more the sharp, decisive man of business, he picked up his hat and went out.

There was a pause of silence in the room after he had quitted it. The lawyer turned his glance slowly round to Miss Forsdyke.

" Well—*Miss Maitland !* " he said, quietly.

The colour left her lips. She looked at him, startled, her face suddenly ashen.

" You recognize me ? " she asked, in a low, tense voice.

He nodded, his eyes fixed searchingly upon her.

"The last time I saw you, Miss Maitland," he said, in level tones, "was eight years ago. You stood your trial for complicity in a bank-fraud."

Her beautiful features set hard and white.

"Yes," she said, faintly.

"I have no desire to go into the details of that case," continued the lawyer. "The jury gave their verdict. Your father received seven years. You were let off lightly."

She made a gesture which fended off a horror in her memory.

'Don't!" she murmured, her eyes a piteous supplication.

"Does your future husband know that you were sentenced to three months' imprisonment?" demanded the old lawyer, inexorably, his voice stern, quiet though were its tones. "And that you served that sentence?"

She looked at him, speechless.

"Have you told him?"

She shook her head, shuddered.

"No." The word came in a murmur.

"And do you propose to tell him?" continued her relentless inquisitor. "*Before you are married?*"

THERE was a silence, then she rose nervously to her feet and faced him.

"Mr. Armitage," she said, "your insinuation is plain enough. I will not resent it. I do not expect you to"—her voice checked and faltered—"to understand. It will perhaps be better for me to await Frank's return in your outer office. I cannot see what right you have to bring up this matter—which concerns us alone."

She moved with dignity towards the door. He rose quickly from his seat and barred her passage.

"Miss Maitland," he said, inflexibly, "I advise you to sit down and listen to me. This bluff won't do!"

"Bluff!" she repeated, in weary mockery. "You misunderstand me, Mr. Armitage. I merely decline to discuss with you a painful personal subject into which you have no right to enter."

"I will not argue the question of right, Miss Maitland," he said, with uncompromising firmness. "Mr. Steynson is my friend and the son of my friend, and I have the right of friendship to protect him. But I also have duties—and my plain duty as legal adviser to the president of an important financial institution is to warn him of the embarrassments he must expect if he marries a woman who——"

"Don't!" she interrupted him, as though shrinking from a touch upon an open wound. "Do you think it does not burn in my brain night and day? Do you think I can ever forget?" She burst out with passionate vehemence. "Do you think I am insensible to the shame that was put upon me? Do you think it is easy for me to deceive the man I love?"

He shrugged his shoulders with a gesture that disclaimed the ultimate responsibility.

"The point is, that he is being deceived, Miss Maitland. That is the only one which concerns me. It is not too late to undeceive him." He took her by the arm, led her back to the chair, stood over her. "Now," he said, gently, "I don't want to lacerate your feelings. You see for yourself how impossible such a marriage is. Let the matter rest there. Give me your written renunciation of all claims upon Mr. Steynson—and I will see that you are amply compensated——"

"You insult me, Mr. Armitage!" she flashed out at him. "I am not marrying Frank for his money!"

Mr. Armitage comported himself in the paternal manner he had found efficacious in many previous interviews with the lady-loves of young men with more wealth than discretion.

"Of course not, of course not, my dear lady," he said, soothingly. "I do not for a moment suggest it. But we lawyers learn to regard money as a great solatium. Now, be sensible. Give me your written renunciation and leave this office before Mr. Steynson returns. I pledge you my word that I will keep strictly secret that unfortunate episode in your career. Mr. Steynson shall be told some story that will satisfy him without reflecting upon you—let us say, that a talented artist such as you could not bring herself to the break with her dramatic triumphs that a domestic existence would imply. Leave it to me. I will settle all that."

She sat with her face buried in her hands, motionless. He could not be sure that she had even heard him.

"Now, what do you say to my proposal?" he asked, with a breezy affection of confidence.

She looked up.

"I am sorry, Mr. Armitage. I did not pay attention to what you were saying. But I can guess at it. You entirely misunderstand me. In no circumstances, if I were not his wife, would I accept money from Mr. Steynson."

The old lawyer smiled in relief.

"That makes my excuses to Mr. Steynson even easier, my dear lady," he said. "You release him unconditionally? I honour your generosity and your common sense."

She looked at him with dignity.

"Mr. Armitage, why do you persist in treating me like an intriguing chorus-girl?

"'The last time I saw you, Miss Maitland,' the lawyer said, 'was eight years ago. You stood your trial for complicity in a bank-fraud.'"

I promised to marry Frank because he loves me and because——"—her pause lent impressiveness to her statement—"I love him. There was and is no other reason."

He contemplated her, probing her sincerity.

"I apologize, Miss Maitland," he said, quietly. "The matter is upon a higher ground. If you love him—and I do not dispute that you do—I appeal to you not to compromise his future. Give him up!"

She hid her face once more in her hands, and her body shook.

"I can't!—I can't!" she murmured. "There is too much at stake!"

Mr. Armitage was puzzled.

"I have already told you," he ventured, "that so far as compensation is concerned——"

"Oh!" she cried, looking up at him. "Have you no thought beyond money? I am not thinking of myself at all. It is not my life that is at stake—or if it is, it does not matter. It is Frank's!"

"Precisely," he concurred. "We are happily agreed on that point."

She looked at him steadily.

"Mr. Armitage," she said, "have you any conception of the real man in Frank Steynson? I do not mean the shrewd, hard-headed business president of the Transatlantic Trust. That is only—what shall I call it?—the machine. I mean the real vital man deep down underneath—the human soul that drives that machine for good or evil. Have you ever seen that human soul?"

"I have known him from boyhood," he fenced. "What are you driving at?"

"There are two kinds of men, Mr. Armitage. There is the kind that is born blind to the significance of life—the kind that sees only money convertible into so much clothes and food and animal pleasure. And there is the kind that instinctively feels there is something behind all that—we will not go into philosophy—the kind that must have an ideal. Do you know which kind is Frank Steynson?"

Mr. Armitage remembered his own words in his talk with the young man.

"He is a born idealist," he said, emphatically.

"Yes," she agreed. "And do you know what happens to the idealist, Mr. Armitage, when his ideals are shattered?"

MR. ARMITAGE forbore to answer. He had a glimpse of possibilities that were ugly. What had Frank said himself? "If this is an illusion—then I'll sell my soul to any devil that will buy it!"—the memory of the words repeated itself like an audible hallucination.

"He goes down to the pit, Mr. Armitage," she pursued, steadily. "I know well what he would do. I know from what I rescued him—he was squandering his life just because he could not identify his ideals with any reality. Were you satisfied with the kind of life Frank was leading up to a few months ago, Mr. Armitage?"

"No," he admitted. "I was not."

She drove her argument home.

"Are you willing to take the responsibility, Mr. Armitage, of destroying Frank's immortal soul—for perhaps we *are* immortal souls, Mr. Armitage; perhaps we are more than lawyers and bankers and actresses—for the sake of a social respectability that may not even be menaced?"

Mr. Armitage hesitated. He felt himself getting entangled in subtleties that had not occurred to his first facile view of the case. He cut through them boldly.

"But this is a mere casuistical begging of the question, Miss Maitland!"

"It is not," she countered, unshaken. "I did not ask to have this responsibility placed upon me—I fled from it. I prayed to be delivered from it; I lay awake night after night, Mr. Armitage, in an agony you cannot even imagine, trying to determine where my duty lay. One thing I saw clearly. I loved Frank and Frank loved me—not with the conventional affection that is bartered for social position and the possession of a good-looking wife, but like elemental man and woman. I saw clearly that this love was what our lives were for. We are not boy and girl. It is the turning-point of our lives—of Frank's life. Clever as he is, he is lost without a woman, without the right woman. If I fail him—he will deliberately make a mock of life."

"But why did you not tell him honestly——?" he interjected.

"I am coming to that," she replied. "Every ideal that Frank has in life is bound up with me. I can at least try to be worthy of them. Should I wantonly shatter them? Mr. Armitage, believe me," she said, with serious emphasis, "it was not for my own sake that I refrained. It was for Frank's. I take the risk."

"It is a risk! If he finds out——"

"If! Life is full of ifs. If either of us died, it would also be a calamity. One must ignore possible calamities if one is to make the best of life."

He took a few impatient steps up and down the room, and then turned and faced her.

"You cannot get away from the fact, Miss Maitland, that you are not the woman he believes you to be."

"Mr. Armitage," she replied, "I answer that with a question. Am I, as I am now, a fit wife for Frank Steynson?"

"Yes," he answered, "*as you are now*, you would do honour to Frank Steynson or any other man—*as you are now!*"

"Mr. Armitage," she said, "as I am now, I am that woman and am that only. Helen Maitland is dead—dead eight years ago in that prison where her father died. Dead with that mother who died with her husband and child locked away from her. Helen Maitland committed a crime. You know the details of it as well as I do. According to the strictest justice, she expiated it. No one has ever identified me with that woman of a distant city. I have made for myself another identity—an identity I can be proud of. No one can honestly say a word against Ella Forsdyke. I *am* Ella Forsdyke, in every detail of my life. It is Ella Forsdyke that Frank Steynson loves—Ella Forsdyke who lifts his life out of sordidness, makes him all that he can be. Am I to break his heart with the disgrace suffered by that quite different woman eight years ago?"

The old lawyer hesitated.

"But, Miss Maitland——" he began.

She put up her hand in protest.

"Please!" she begged. "I have earned my right to the other!"

He gave way courteously.

"Miss Forsdyke, then—I beg your pardon—I do not query your motives. I can see your point of view. I believe—in fact, I know—that every ideal in Frank's life is identified with his belief in you. But—should he accidentally discover the truth, his ideals will still be shattered. You cannot guarantee that he will not discover it." He pondered a moment. "He must be told! It is plain morality!"

"You would convert the uncertainty, the bare chance, into the absolute certainty of wrecking both our lives!" she answered. "That is a curious morality!"

The best of women, he thought—and he did not deny to himself that she was no common woman—have no conception of abstract ethics. It was true that this was an extremely concrete case. He stood perplexed and silent for a moment.

"My dear Miss Forsdyke," he said, "I admit that it is a dilemma in morals. You and I both feel that Frank cannot be trusted with the truth. On the other hand, he is a full-grown man with the full responsibility for his own existence. We cannot take that from him. And both of us—whatever our motives—commit a crime against him if we withhold a truth so vital to his life."

"But if we deliberately kill all that is best in him with that truth?"

"My dear Miss Forsdyke, as I have said, it is a dilemma in morals. A long experience of life has taught me that when confronted with such a dilemma there is only one safe course—and that is to hold fast to one's principles! My principle is *truth!*"

She remained silent.

He came close to her again.

"Miss Forsdyke," he said, solemnly, "you believe that Frank really loves you—not an idealized transfiguration of you—but you—the real woman?"

"Yes," she said, "I believe that."

"You love him—knowing all his secret weaknesses—the real man?"

"Yes," she answered again. "I do—it is all Frank."

"Right!" he said. "Now, then, I challenge you—if you really believe in his love—to put it to the test. If it will not stand the test, it is useless to both of you."

She hesitated, looked up at him piteously.

"Mr. Armitage," she said, "I—I am afraid—desperately afraid—for him!"

"If you do not tell him," he said, decisively, "*I shall!* The moment he returns. But I shall not believe in your love if you do not tell him yourself."

She hid her face in her hands and was silent. Mr. Armitage looked at her. It was absurd to imagine that an actress would be praying!

THE next moment the door opened and Frank Steynson entered. He came across to them.

"I must apologize for being so long," he said. "It was a most urgent matter. Now, Ella"—he turned to her—"I am afraid I must weary you with business for a few minutes."

She looked up at him, an indefinable expression in her eyes.

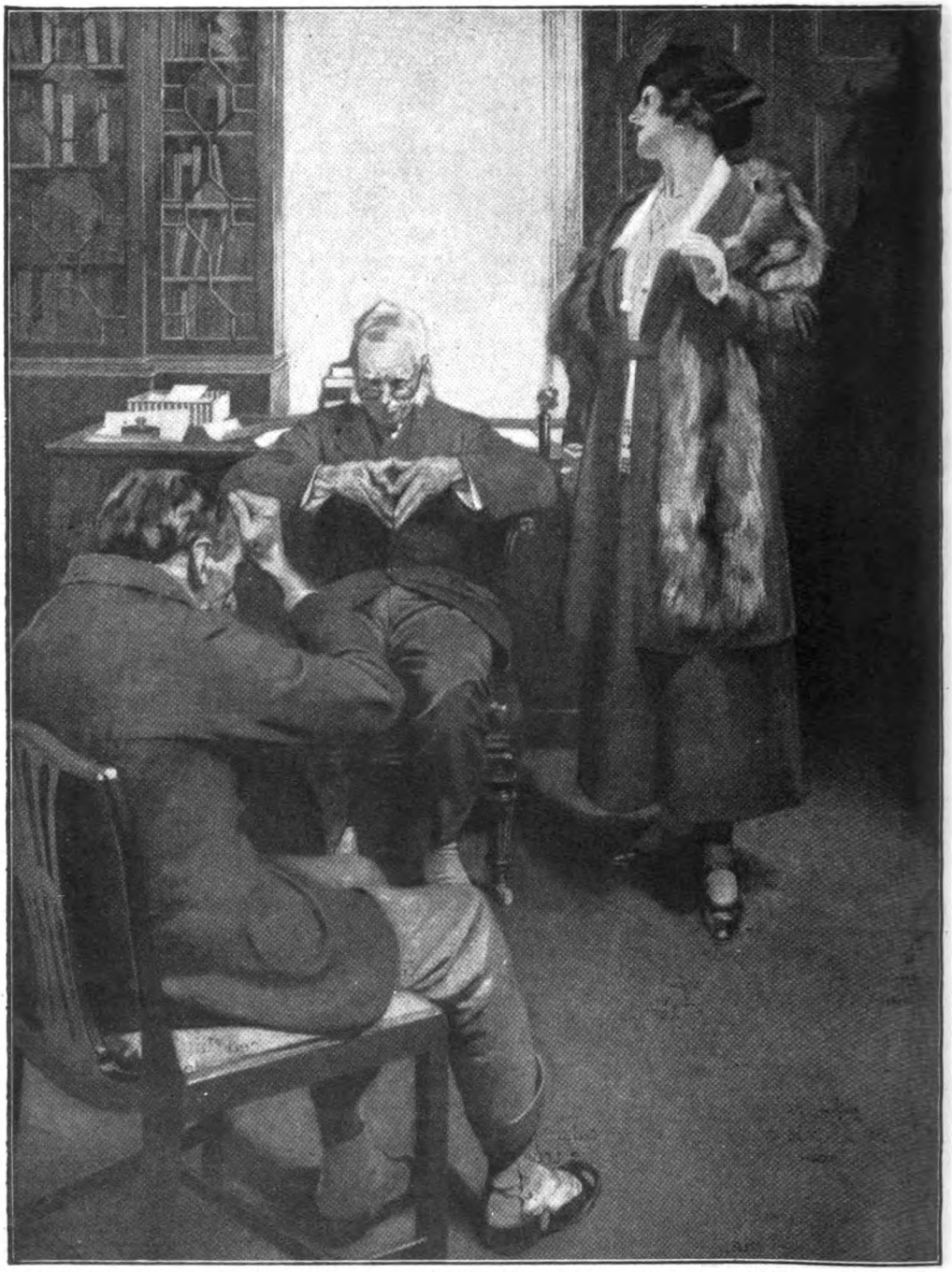
Mr. Armitage interposed.

"Frank," he said, impressively. "Before we talk business, there is something Miss Forsdyke has to say to you."

Startled, the young man stared at her. There was a hushed pause as she rose slowly to her feet and faced him. Her beautiful face was as white as marble. The effort with which she attained to words emphasized their gravity.

"Yes, I have something to tell you, Frank," she said. "And before I do, I release you absolutely from—from your engagement. I have a confession to make. Eight years ago—when I was twenty-one—I served a term of imprisonment for complicity in a bank-fraud. You can judge for yourself whether I am a fit wife for the president of a financial corporation."

"What!" he cried, unable to believe his ears. "What!—you—imprisonment—a bank-fraud!" He stared at her as though in difficulty to reconcile this woman with the one he had left a short quarter of an hour



"The young man collapsed into a chair, his fists against his brow. 'Oh, my God! my God!' he murmured to himself. 'This is the end of all things!'"

ago. "Not you!—No!—It is incredible!—Not you!—Not Ella Forsdyke!"

"No," she answered. "Not Ella Forsdyke—Helen Maitland."

"But——," utterly bewildered, he looked from her to Mr. Armitage, grimly silent, and back to her again. "Even if"—he stopped, appalled by her obvious sincerity—

"even if—you—you—you were imprisoned—it was a mistake! You were innocent! For God's sake, tell me you were innocent, Ella!"

"No," she replied, strangely unemotional, her eyes watching him. "I was guilty."

The young man collapsed into a chair, his fists against his brow.

"Oh, my God! my God!" he murmured to himself. "This is the end of all things!"

She stood watching him in silence for yet a moment or two. He did not look up at her. Then she turned to the old lawyer.

"We have applied the test," she said, and he admired the hard-won self-control of her voice. "You see the result. You were perhaps right. Good day, Mr. Armitage."

She bowed to him and moved towards the door.

* * *

BEFORE she could reach it, the young man had sprung to his feet, leaped in front of her.

"No!" he cried, with passionate vehemence. "No! You shall not go like that! Tell me—one word—was everything else a lie?"

She met his eyes unflinchingly.

"Everything else," she said, steadily, "was truth. You knew the whole of my life save that one episode. But that episode, I know, is the unforgivable. Let me go!" She moved as though to pass him.

He held her by both arms, looked into her eyes.

"Ella!" he said. "Would you still love me if I were a man disgraced?"

She strove to free herself, evaded the question.

"Don't torture me, Frank. Let me go."

A stubborn determination came into his face.

"No," he said. "I want my answer!"

Her eyes brimmed with sudden tears.

"What need to ask?" she replied, scarcely trusting her voice. "*You know!*"

"I *do* know," he said. "I know that you are my woman!" There was a curious emergence of the primitive male in his eyes, in the voice with which he recklessly disowned the conventions of civilization. "I don't care what you did! I don't care if you committed murder! You are my woman! There's no life for me without you—whatever you are! I know that, if I know nothing else!"

She struggled in his arms. He turned round savagely upon the old lawyer.

"I suppose you dragged this—this shame out of her?" he said, in fierce resentment. "Why can't you mind your own business?"

"My dear Frank," expostulated the old gentleman, staggered at the turn things had taken.

She intervened quickly.

"Don't blame Mr. Armitage, Frank," she said. "He was quite right. You had to be told the truth."

He frowned, unappeased.

"The truth, yes," said the old lawyer, stepping forward. 'But Miss Forsdyke has not told you the complete truth, Frank. She has told you the half-truth which was most damaging to herself. I handled that case for the prosecution, and I know the details. Miss Forsdyke omitted to tell you that in her youth she posted the ledger in a bank where her father was cashier. Her mother was dying and her father falsified his accounts to send her to a sanatorium. Miss Maitland discovered the false entry and—in the vain hope of giving her mother time to die in ignorance of the truth—she made a false entry in her own books which, for the time being, covered up her father's defalcation. Technically she was guilty, and the fact could not be overlooked. Morally, she was undoubtedly in a dilemma. It was one which I should not like to have to decide for myself."

"And you call that a crime!" exclaimed the young man. "I call it self-sacrifice. Ella, can you forgive my moment's doubt of you?"

She smiled at him, sadly.

"The disgrace is there, Frank—can never be washed out. As Mr. Armitage said, how can I be the wife of a bank-president? It is impossible."

"Impossible!" He laughed and turned to the lawyer. "You remember my big scheme? The thing we were talking of when I came in? It's smashed—smashed to bits. The Paris house has just failed for a huge sum. It's a near thing for a receivership for ourselves. That was the telephone message which called me away. I found the whole bunch of directors waiting for me—it's board-day—and they told me pretty plainly that I could get out. They distrust my romantic idealisms, they said. I left them to it—promised to come back in half an hour and resign decently." He turned to Ella. "I am a man disgraced, you see."

"Oh, Frank!" she exclaimed, in genuine sympathy. "It's failed?—The big thing you talked of?"

He pulled her close into his arms.

"No," he said. "The really big thing is a certain success!"

MAURICE AND LEONORA HUGHES,
who have won great popularity in London and Paris.

FOOTNOTES ON DANCING

AN ARTICLE OF GREAT INTEREST TO DANCERS AND DANCE-GIVERS.

By PHILIP J. S. RICHARDSON

(*Editor of "The Dancing Times."*)

THE tremendous upheaval of our social fabric which was caused by the war has had its repercussion in the world of dancing, and we are now just getting far enough away from the event to see its results in a proper perspective. It is not so very many years ago since the really young man considered it a little *infra dig.* to be a good dancer. Just before the war, when there was such a boom in dancing, he was beginning to change his opinions, and during the war he came to the conclusion that when on fourteen days' leave a dance, as often as he could get one, was the best antidote he could find to the dreary memory of the trenches.

The war caused the young man to take to dancing: it also made his elderly relatives dance too in order that they might accompany him in his brief spell of pleasure.

WHY THE FOXTROT BECAME SO POPULAR.

The young man had never danced before: the older man had not danced for years. Their days of pleasure were limited. Something was required that was easy to learn. That is why the valse, which even in its modern bostonized form takes time to master, was temporarily given the cold shoulder, and that is why the foxtrot and the one-step, with their simple, almost go-as-you-please movements, became so popular.

The amount of freedom given to the individual in these two dances was also a happy contrast to the discipline of the Army which the precision of the valse rather suggested.

With the coming of the Armistice the pendulum swung too far in the direction of freedom, and the dancing in our ballrooms, particularly in the foxtrot, if never indelicate, as we are told it was on the Continent, became decidedly freakish. Dancing was running riot, and it was necessary to call a halt.

Complaints were made that the foxtrot was so varied and eccentric that unless two people had been to the same teacher they could not dance together. This charge, although generally an exaggeration, possessed a certain substratum of truth.

An informal conference of all the principal ballroom teachers in this country was held at the Grafton Galleries in May, 1920, and again in October, and the suggestion (very wisely these teachers only "suggested") was made that all steps of a freakish nature, including dips, twinkles, lifts, and exaggerated pauses, were in bad form and should not be used. It was also suggested that it would add to the comfort of the ballroom if dancers would always progress round the room and not take sideways or rearward steps which obstructed other dancers; and finally it was recommended that certain movements in the foxtrot and one-step be adopted as the standard, and that all teachers taught these movements before they showed anything else to their pupils. It was thought that by this method it could be insured that two people who visited different teachers would know the fundamental steps in common.

Thanks to the wide publicity given by the Press, and to the good sense of the dancers themselves, these suggestions were widely adopted. The standard movements in the foxtrot were the foxtrot walk, the chassé or two-step, and the three-step. In the one-step they were the walk, one step to each beat in all directions.

These suggestions would have been very much longer before they were universally adopted had it not been for the fashion which came in during the autumn of 1920 of holding dance competitions in the West-end. Big foxtrot competitions (it was generally the foxtrot, but the other dances were not entirely forgotten) were held at the Grafton Galleries, at the Embassy Club, at

DELMARES AND SANDRINI,

French exhibition dancers who appeared at the Savoy Hotel dances.

Murray's Club, at Queen's, at the Piccadilly Hotel, at the Hyde Park Hotel, at the New Carlton Club, at Claridge's Hotel, and elsewhere, culminating in the "Ivory Cross" Competition on the stage of the Alhambra Theatre before an audience of nearly two thousand people.

LONDON'S BALLROOM DANCING THE BEST IN THE WORLD.

The judges at these competitions took as their criterion the standard laid down by the teachers at their informal conference, and dancers soon realized that unless they made that standard their aim they had very little chance in any competition. The result has been astonishing. Eccentric steps have vanished from the ballroom; dancing generally has so improved that it is commonly conceded that the best ballroom dancing in the world is to be seen in London; and, finally, there has come into being quite a large coterie of dancers in the West-end who have reduced the foxtrot, which is still *the* dance of the moment, to a fine art. Merely using the recommended steps, with the addition of an occasional crossing of the feet, they are able to sweep round the room in a delightfully flowing movement that absolutely expresses the rhythm of the dance.

In the provinces and, strange to say, in Paris, the full possibilities of this perfect foxtrot are as yet unknown. In Paris the "dancings" are mostly small and, in the season, crowded. The bands play more jerkily than they do in London; as a result, the foxtrot is jerky. The use of the flowing "three-step" movement is almost unknown; but even if this were not so, space would cramp it. One gets the impression that the dancers, held up by the crowd and yet feeling that they must do something to follow the jerky beat of the music, have had recourse to the much-debated "shimmy" to help them out of their difficulty. Sometimes the "shimmy" is done with the entire body as well as with the feet; but this is decidedly objectionable and is taboo with the best teachers. A few months ago it appeared that the "shimmy" would take root over here. Dancers began to feel that they were being restricted in the steps they could use and to chafe against the unwritten law that they should confine their movements to the recommended steps.

THE "TODDLE"—AND WHAT IT IS.

This limitation has by now served its purpose, and it is only natural that further developments should take place; otherwise the foxtrot will disappear. We shall see a new movement this autumn, but it will not be the "shimmy." It is far more likely that it will be an adaptation of the American "toddle," which has arisen in the States for

MARJORIE MOSS AND GEORGES FONTANA,

Two of the best exhibition dancers of to-day, who have made a big reputation for themselves in Paris, Cannes, Deauville, and Spa.

MARJORIE MOSS AND GEORGES FONTANA.

In this and the previous photograph notice the beautiful lines made by the lady's arms – a result only obtainable by thorough training.

the same reason that the "shimmy" has come to the fore in Paris. It may be described as a double springy motion on each step what time the body very slightly sways to the side on which one is stepping. The steps may be taken in all directions and there are two counts to each step and two steps to each measure.

The perfection which many young dancers have reached in the foxtrot has made them turn their attention to the valse, and with the passing of super-syncopation and noise and the return to melody the wonderful lilt of the " queen of dances " is heard far more frequently than used to be the case. The modern valse is a combination of the pre-war boston, the hesitation, and a walking movement in valse time. It is a dance of infinite variety and never-ending charm, and it will become once more a popular feature at our dances this autumn.

Another dance which has been in the offing for some considerable time is the modern tango. In Paris and on the Continent the tango occurs at dances nearly as frequently as does the foxtrot over here. With the return, in the autumn, of those holiday-makers who have visited the French casinos it is probable that it will once more find an established place on our dance programmes. The modern tango bears very little resemblance to the tango of pre-war days. The exaggerated corte and the intricate figures have disappeared. As danced to-day in Paris it is very simple. There are about four movements, the actual steps of which can be learned in half an hour. It is a very unostentatious dance: the man dancing it need never fear that he is in any way making an exhibition of himself—the thing the English dancer dreads. If the steps are simple, the peculiar *habanera* rhythm with its fascinating tunes is perhaps a trifle difficult to master, but, after the valse, it is the dance *par excellence*. If only the dancing public will realize that the modern tango is simple and quite free of those *outré* steps which killed the early tango they would soon be dancing it. To liken it, as some scribes of the Press do, to the minuet or the gavotte is not only ridiculous but misleading.

Since the war many things connected with dancing have changed besides the actual dancing itself. I will not venture to say anything about woman's dress, which appears to vary hour by hour, but I may dare to say a word about the man. The war and the popularity of the Dance Club in London will probably account for the number of men one still sees at dances in dinner-jackets instead of the proverbial tail-coat and white waistcoat. To-day one can go to nearly any subscription dance in London in a dinner-jacket without feeling out of place, and gloves for men are never worn with such a jacket. At private dances and at a few of the more important subscription dances one would feel uncomfortable—figuratively, if not actually

—unless in the regulation pre-war attire. In my humble opinion, the most painful "contradiction in terms" is the dinner-jacket with a white waistcoat—a combination not so infrequent as one would imagine.

The war has witnessed the passing of the old string band and the coming of the so-called "Jazz Band" from America. For a period super-syncopation and noise held sway in our ballrooms; but to-day, although the composition of our dance orchestras is based on the American bands which came over a few years ago, super-syncopation and noise are considered old-fashioned and out-of-date. There is a clamouring for melody, and the noisy foxtrots of '19 have given way to the almost valse-like melodies of "Avalon," "Whispering," and "The Love Nest."

It will probably be urged that whereas this article is all about ballroom dancing, the illustrations are of steps which are confined to exhibition dancers. The fact of the matter is that modern ballroom dancing is so simple in its steps, and so quiet in its movements, that it does not lend itself to photographic treatment. A couple could be posed in a valse step and again in a foxtrot step, but the difference would be so slight that the illustrations would be valueless.

DOROTHY DICKSON AND CARL HYSON,

Two well-known American exhibition dancers who were in London during the summer.

In modern ballroom dancing the feet and legs are used merely as instruments to carry the body round the room in harmony with the rhythm of the music. In such old-time dances as the minuet and the gavotte the feet and legs were used to give what may be called "decorative detail" to the dance. In our present utilitarian age we have come down to essentials and such decorative work is not used. That is one of the fundamental differences between modern and old-time dancing. If my readers will recollect that the first movement in walking is not an advancing of one leg but a throwing forward of the body, and then will bear in mind that the same statement applies to dancing to-day, they will grasp the strange fact as to what a secondary position the legs occupy in the modern ballroom. It is the body that dances.

Exhibition dancers are so associated with modern ballroom dancing, and they have been so much in evidence during the past decade, that a word about them may not be out of place. In this country the custom of introducing a pair of exhibition dancers at a restaurant during dinner or during the course of a dance came in with the tango. The general public could not do the new dance, and so a couple, such as Marquis and Miss Clayton, were provided to show how it should be done. It may be taken as an axiom that those who go to dances to-day have no use for an exhibition couple who merely do straightforward ballroom dances. They wish to see something they cannot do themselves. There are, for instance, few better valsers than Maurice, but if he and Leonora Hughes contented themselves with a straightforward ballroom valse dancers would not be excited over them at all.

In the old days any really good couple of ballroom dancers could, with practice and the addition of a few fancy steps, become very fair exhibition dancers. To-day one of our most prominent, and probably the best exhibition dancer, Marjorie Moss, happens to be a trained operatic dancer. She and her partner, Georges Fontana, have therefore evolved quite a new style of exhibition work in which numerous ballet steps and positions are used, and, on the Continent, have enjoyed a remarkable popularity.

THEIR LAST QUARREL

by

W·B·MAXWELL

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

MABEL SELKIRK was a dark-haired, graceful woman of thirty-three; and George, her husband, a year or two older, had naturally kind blue eyes and an engaging smile. Both were popular with their neighbours, who still spoke of them as a handsome couple, and rather envied them because they possessed —over and above good health and sufficient means—one of the jolliest little houses in the whole suburb.

Of a truth they ought to have been happy, for fate had been gentle to them. He might have died in the war instead of being here alive and vigorous; she might have been a widow, dependent on ageing parents, with no pretty home to manage, no smart frocks to buy, no wide interests to fill and give meaning to existence. They had known only a single real sorrow, and at their time of life they might go on hoping to repair that great loss. They *ought* to have been happy. But they spoilt it all by senseless nagging. They squabbled about anything or nothing.

"The fact that I disliked her manner should have been enough for you," said George, with a gesture of lofty displeasure. "Yet, behind my back, you go and engage her. Why do you do such a thing?"

"Because servants are scarce," said Mabel, "and because I am supposed to be the mistress of the house. Also because I happen to like the girl very much indeed."

"Oh, no, you don't," said George, warmly. "You dislike her as much as I do. You see perfectly well that she is untrustworthy, impudent, and probably full of criminal instincts—a criminal herself very likely. But you won't own yourself wrong."

"Why should I, till I'm proved wrong?" And she laughed scornfully. "In your opinion I'm never right, of course. Shall I make out a placard, so that you can hang it in the hall—or the kitchen, where the tradesmen's boys can see it—large capitals, you know? 'I, Mabel Selkirk, herewith confess that when compared with my inscrutably wise lord and master I am devoid of intelligence, a poor abject fool, and——'"

"Rot! I have a right to be consulted, and no one can say I don't allow you full liberty——"

"Liberty to read your thoughts before you know them yourself, and to act on your advice before you give it?"

"I did give it," said George, suddenly shouting. "And now, on top of all, it comes out that you took the girl without a character."

That was how they talked to each other—not every day, but perhaps once a week, with periods of cold silence, formal courtesy, and unexpected melting reconciliation in the interval before they exploded again. The grievance of the new pert maid was nothing really, only an excuse for a wrangle. Recrimination had gradually become a habit, a necessity, and its bitterness and force were always deepening.

It is dreadful when husbands and wives quarrel regularly, because they become more and more accomplished in the art. They know each other's weak spots so well that they are able to make every word sting.

Why do they do it? A poison, one must suppose, enters their blood; or some ancient inherited instinct of cruelty drives them; they are possessed with a lust for destruction that has been handed down to them, through countless dim ancestors, from the time when pre-historic men and women fell out over their food and wrecked the happy cave. They do not at the present day shatter the furniture; the havoc is not material; they only try to destroy the spiritual peace of home and to tear to pieces all that makes the inner life beautiful and sacred. And yet—what is so very curious—they are often essentially fond of each other all the while.

Now, on a bright October morning, when

all the world looked gay and clean in the sunlight after a night of rain, the Selkirks reached the culmination of their disagreements.

"I suppose you were brooding over your wrongs yesterday evening," said Mabel, with a defiant flash of her dark eyes, "when you sat like a statue and wouldn't speak."

"I was silent because I couldn't trust myself to speak. I thought I would sleep on it, and then ask you for an explanation calmly and quietly—as I mean to do now, if you will be good enough to restrain yourself."

"Yes, but you're always so preposterously slow. How can I give you an explanation until you condescend to mention what there is to explain?"

"If you'll simply answer two or three plain questions——"

But they were obliged to pause, because Edith, the new maid, came into the room, put a rack of fresh toast on the breakfast table, and made up the wood fire.

WHILE the maid remained in the room George Selkirk breathed hard, stared at the tablecloth, crumbled a bit of toast instead of eating it, and Mabel shot defiant but anxious glances at his sombre face. She prepared herself for battle, understanding instinctively that this was going to be a big thing. As it seemed to her, there was a sort of deadly coldness about him that indicated a quite unusual weight and importance behind his opening attack. And she guessed correctly. He felt strong and determined in the solidity of his grievance; for once, at least, he had something worth making a fuss about.

Directly the maid left them alone he began, as he had promised, quietly.

"Mabel, why didn't you tell me that while you were staying with your mother at Esher you came up to London once or twice?"

"I didn't tell you because I didn't do it."

"Suppose I informed you that somebody saw you there, what would you say?"

"I should say that somebody made a mistake."

George shrugged his shoulders. "My dear girl, what's the use of pretending? You were seen there."

"I flatly deny it. Suppose I had been to London, why should I say I hadn't been? There's nothing disgraceful or to be ashamed of in going to London. You go to London yourself every day, don't you?"

"I go on business."

"And suppose I'd been there for pleasure, would you make that a crime? I don't have so much amusement that you need grudge—— "

"That's not the point. Listen, please. You were seen—and you were not alone. You had a companion with you."

"Indeed? This is getting interesting. Perhaps you'll kindly tell me my companion's name."

"No; that's what I want you to tell me."

Mabel gave her well-known scornful laugh. "What sort of person was she—this mysterious accomplice of mine?"

"It wasn't a woman at all. It was a man."

"A *man!*" And Mabel laughed again. "This is really most amusing. What kind of man? I hope he was young and attractive. Not an old fogey!"

George had left the breakfast-table with its untouched food, and he stood on the hearth-rug trying to light a cigarette. But his fingers shook and he broke the wooden matches.

"Mabel, I warn you I don't consider this a joking matter."

"Oh, but surely I must warn you, too! If it isn't something to laugh at, it is something to resent—to resent very intensely. And I don't want to be forced to do that."

"It's not the least good getting on the high horse. I have a perfect right to ask you, and I mean to know the truth."

"You have been told the truth, and I'm certainly not going to repeat it."

"Observe, I have made no accusation of any sort."

"Oh, you're too considerate!"

"But I want to know who is the gentleman that you honour with your company for a parade round London while I, sitting in my office hard at work, suppose you are with your mother at Esher."

"And I *was* there all the time."

So it went on, she denying, and he growing more and more angry.

"George, one minute! *Who* saw me?"

"Well, if you want to know, it was my sister Annie."

"Her eyes deceived her. She's so short-sighted that she can't see across the road."

"She followed you."

"Oh, thanks. An amateur detective in the family. Very useful. And *where* did she dog my footsteps?"

"She saw you at Waterloo the first time. On the second occasion, two days later, you were going up Regent Street. You were with the same man on both occasions. Who was he?"

"Take it from me, George. Your sister Annie is no good at her job. Another time, when you want to have me watched, employ a professional."

"I suppose you'll tell me next that you don't wear a violet cloak with an ermine stole, or a bird of paradise hat?"

"No, I won't tell you that, because it would be absurd; but I *can* tell you that I didn't take those things to my mother's."

HER obstinate denials made him furious. He was jealous, too, but jealous in a particular way. Not for a moment, even at the height of his wrath, did he believe that she could ever be unfaithful to him, but he considered that by indulging in clandestine rambles with men friends she derogated from the dignity of her position as his wife. Other wives might follow the prevailing fashion and lark about with their faithful chums, their pet boys, their tame cats, or whatever they called them, but not *his* wife. It wounded his vanity more than it shocked his sense of propriety. Moreover, he felt acutely that at thirty-three she was too old to behave like a young pleasure-loving girl. And, lastly, he suffered from an irrational but extreme annoyance from the fact that she had dressed herself in her very best clothes for these escapades. That ermine and violet combination with the rather too gorgeous hat formed the most recently acquired and most highly prized treasures of her wardrobe. She had worn them only once with him, and then at a local party of the greatest pomp and splendour. Yet she had put them all on twice at least to stroll along the pavements with this idle, good-for-nothing ass, whoever he was.

He became violent, coming back to the table and shouting at her, not caring whether the servants or anyone else heard their raised voices. She, too, was noisy, speaking while he spoke, vowing that he had grossly insulted her, that rather than support such insults she would leave him for ever.

But, at something that he said, she gave a cry almost as if he had struck her, and stretched out her hand as if appealing for mercy. He was startled by the gesture and the tone. Then, for a moment of time, he felt a sudden arrest of his passion, a compassionate reluctance and doubt. In this fugitive moment it seemed as if she had changed from the maddeningly irritating woman of thirty-three to something remotely different; as if he had caught a glimpse of the girl he had married twelve years ago, the slender, fragile, graceful creature that he had sworn to love and cherish until death should them part. It seemed to him, while the illusion lasted, that he must just take her in his arms and be kind to her, whether she deserved kindness or not; and if only she could have been silent, he might have done it. But the moment passed, she was speaking again, and his anger flared up more fiercely than before.

"I'll never speak to Annie again—no, not if she apologizes to me on her knees."

If neighbours and friends could have seen them now—the still handsome couple that went to church on Sunday mornings, or sat side by side on the Parade smiling and nodding after Divine service! The husband's face was fiery red as he leaned across the table, his voice was hoarse, his kindly blue eyes seemed bloodshot; the wife, white and haggard, had hard lines on each side of her nose; her mouth writhed.

By brute force of invective he was getting the better of her; she flung her arms about, she made frenzied gasps. And then all at once they became quiet, looking like two mad people who have worn themselves out and are ready to lie down on the floor of the padded cell until strength returns to them.

"There," said George, at the door of the room, "so now you know. If I had my choice, I never want to see you again. You may do what you like and go where you like—go to the devil, if you like."

Mabel made a sound in her throat, and he banged the door behind him. He heard her sobbing noisily as he snatched his hat and umbrella and went through the pretty little hall. He banged the outer door so fiercely that the small diamond panes of its upper panel nearly jumped from their sockets.

The vista of the quiet side road opened before him; trees, white gates, red-brick gables on either hand; and three hundred yards away, at the bottom of the slope, the traffic of the main thoroughfare to London sweeping across it—a flowing stream of omnibuses, motor-cars, lorries.

By one of the garden gates his middle-aged spinster sister stood peering out through her gold-rimmed spectacles. She was waiting for him and she called to him to stop, but he only waved his hand and hurried on. She also went to London nearly every day, to do some queer research work, half literary, half scientific, at the British Museum; and she loved to travel in the train with her brother, chattering all the way. To-day, however, he would not have been able to bear her chatter.

THE traffic made a notoriously dangerous corner of the bottom of the road, but it was without thought, automatically, that he glanced to the right and to the left, before he dashed across to the further pavement and hurried on past the garage and the shops. A doctor from the adjacent hospital, a man he knew and liked, hailed him cheerily, but he neither saw this friend nor heard his greeting. The manager of the garage spoke to him, and he was unaware of this too.

The poison of rage still throbbed in his blood. Preoccupied by his burning thoughts, concentrated on the narrow orbit of personal emotion, he stood among the crowd at the railway-station, took his seat in the train, and eventually found his way to his office in

London without once rising to a clear comprehension of the material universe. For the time the whole scheme of creation had contracted to the small but monstrous phenomenon of the unfortunate married life of that good, that injured, and justly indignant personage known as George Selkirk.

It is so much the habit of business men to pigeon-hole the domestic side of existence when they sit down at their desks and, as it were, to hang up private cares and worries much as they put their hat on a peg and their umbrella in a stand, that he had a sudden sense of calmness and relief when he began to breathe the office atmosphere. It would be a respite at any rate. For here, till nightfall, whether he wished it or no, he must think of business and nothing else.

But to-day even the strength of well-established custom failed him.

Among his letters there was a long one from his sister. She had addressed it to the office, because, as she explained, it was a strictly confidential communication. This caution on Annie's part struck him as unnecessary and irritating.

"Whatever Mabel's faults," he thought, bitterly, "she doesn't play the spy with other people's correspondence. It is offensive of Annie to imply such a doubt—but, poor soul, she knows no better."

Then he read Annie's letter. It was all about the new maid, that girl Edith. Annie begged him to be on his guard. She said it had come to her knowledge that the maid had been seen "flaunting about the Parade at a late hour and behaving in an altogether indecorous manner." And the other night when Annie went to their house very late indeed, "well after 11 p.m.," the girl was out. The cook came and answered the bell. "It was on Thursday, the night that you and Mabel went to the theatre. Did you know she was out during your absence?"

"At something that he said, she gave a cry out her hand as if appealing for mercy. He

Further, on another day, the girl had spoken curtly and rudely to Annie, but Annie did not wish to dwell on that. "Honestly, my dear George, I do not think she is at all a nice person, and I wonder what character Mabel got with her. If she engaged her through Mrs. Burt's agency, I think you ought

to know that they are very careless there, and in my opinion not to be relied on."

The letter made him very angry again; but, strangely, his anger took a new direction now. He inwardly raged against his sister Annie. She must be cracked to bother him with this rubbish on top of her tremendously painful and serious communication about his wife.

"I'd like to know how it concerns Annie," he thought, with disgust, "what servants Mabel chooses to employ. Cursed interference! Why can't one's relations leave one alone?"

He tore up the letter and pitched the fragments contemptuously into his waste-paper basket, thinking the while

almost as if he had struck her, and stretched was startled by the gesture and the tone."

of the arrogant folly that impels friends and relatives to offer unsolicited counsel on matters that they cannot possibly understand. The only excuse for Annie was that, being a stupid and unimaginative old maid, she could not make the faintest guess at what married life really was. No one, however near and dear, should ever interfere between a husband and wife. To that extent Mabel was perfectly justified in her resentment of Annie's tale-bearing with regard to the larger and more important subject.

He sat idle at his desk, not attempting to work, merely thinking. When clerks came into his room he sent them away, saying that he was too busy to attend to anything for the moment. He thought of what his wife had been to him in the past, of what she was to him now, really and truly, except when those poisonous fumes clouded his mind.

They were gone now, unaccountably but surely, and an immense weariness descended upon him—a fatigue of the spirit, tinged with remorse and tenderness. She had been wrong, and *very* irritating; but he had been wrong too. And it was wrong to question

her in that policeman fashion. All the same, it was, of course, silly of her not to answer with frankness. If she had merely said, "My dear old George, how can you go on in this tragic and absurd fashion? I was only going to see some picture with young Reggie Dale"—or Mr. Hopkins, or whoever it was. "Surely you don't want to pay *him* the compliment of being angry and jealous?" Then he would have felt mollified, would at once have made it up. A pity! On the other hand, his violence did not give her a chance. She denied, not from a sense of guilt, but from fear. He regretted his violence. He had said brutal things to her.

They were awful, those last parting words of his. It was as if he had wished her dead! Of course, she knew that he did not mean that. Not for an instant would she entertain such a terrible idea—she knew that there could be no real meaning in his words.

He was unable to work. When his clerks came in he sent them away again.

HE went out to luncheon, and sat for an absurdly long time at the table, thinking all the while. He admitted to himself that he had gone too far; goaded by her sharp resistance, he had lost control of himself and said altogether unpardonable things. "Never want to see you again"—vulgar as well as ridiculous! No, indeed. What could he do without her? One's wife is one's wife—especially after twelve years; bound to one by the invincible chains of habit, as well as by thousands and thousands of delicate sentimental threads; hopes and memories shared in common, joy and sadness, even heated arguments and tearful agreements, have tied her to one closer and closer; whatever she may have been in the earlier days, she is flesh of one's flesh—when twelve years find you still together.

The restaurant waiters had to call him back. He was leaving the place after all without paying his bill.

Instead of returning to the office, he walked along the Embankment. As he walked he thought of the war. Over and done with now. Forgotten, too? Almost it would seem so. He remembered the uplift, his own lofty thoughts, the vows that he had made to himself when, like everybody else out there, he was brought down to stark realities, when night and day Death stared him in the face. With the eyes of that pallid companion always on one, essentials alone were visible, or at least noticeable; all else tumbled into its proper dust of nothingness.

Only the great cause mattered. One's own life and a million other lives had no weight or value except as thrown into the balance of victory and defeat. But suppose when victory came a merciful providence had spared one, had allowed one to be still alive; then, after the tremendous lesson, how strong and firm one would be for the remainder of one's days! Trifling cares could never again touch one; the correct standard of great and small would never, could never, be lost. Air to breathe, just sufficient food to give one energy for the day's work, any sort of shelter to keep one dry at night—what more could one ever ask for? Sunlight, the movement of living things, freedom of mind—what higher joys would one dare to crave?

Is it possible that one should so soon forget, so soon abandon the larger scale of proportion, and, sinking to the old low level, become again the rebellious but helpless slave of insignificant trifles, shout the house down if the mutton is badly cooked, and complain to Heaven if the parlourmaid tosses her head or answers one's reproof with flippantness?

He remembered his thoughts of home while the war lasted. On the march, going up to the trenches at night, coming down in the grey morning, he carried with him a luminous vision of his home—the pleasant, the adorable little house, with its pretty rooms and pretty things. He used to *see* it and feel an unfathomable yearning tenderness for the woman in the house, *his* woman, the only woman that counted. He knew, as certainly as if he had truly seen her, that she was looking out towards him with brave, patient eyes, waiting for him, praying for him, *loving* him all the time.

Mabel had been grand and fine during the war—it was only common justice to remember that.

If she was snappy and short of temper nowadays, this was probably due to the reaction after the war, the breakdown of nerves that had been overstrained. He fastened upon this very simple thought as though finding a great comfort in it. Reaction. It was the key to his own failings as well as to hers. All these recent squabbles were so many signs of an abnormal state of mind, and it would therefore be absurd to feel frightened by them, or to suppose that they indicated any danger of permanent disunion. He and Mabel must recover their normal composure, must get back into their real selves as soon as possible. That was all about it.

IT was raining now, but he continued to stroll backwards and forwards between Blackfriars Bridge and the Temple. He was considering exactly how, without loss of pride, he could put everything right with Mabel after dinner this evening.

She herself would probably make an opening for reconciliation. She always did. She

would stretch out her hand or glance at him appealingly, as she had done this morning; only not in a grievous manner, but with a smile. And he would jump at the chance. A kiss, a kind word, and after that she would of her own free will give him all the answers to those questions of his. She would cling to him, and perhaps cry a little—but all the trouble would be past.

It was raining heavily, and he stood for a little while under a plane tree thinking of how they had mingled their tears at the time of their great sorrow. After the child died it seemed as if sunshine and brightness had gone for ever. Two years does not sound very long when one says the words, but they are more than long enough for a child to take so big a place in one's heart that the world seems empty when that place loses its tenant.

They had both loved her—but, of course, a mother's love must be immeasurably the greater. One night, after the silence of their loss had fallen upon the house, he found Mabel in the room they had called the nursery. She was lying face downwards on the floor. He raised her up and sat with her by the window, holding her in his arms, trying to comfort her. They sat there together all through the night till the dawn came. It was a summer night; and as he thought of it, the perfume of the garden flowers seemed to rise from the pavement beneath his feet; he could hear the twittering of awakened birds in trees that showed darkly against the reddening sky; he could feel his wife's cold, wet face pressed close to his own. He had mourned with her and yearned over her, wishing that he could bear all the pain, her share as well as his. A lump came into his throat as he remembered these things. How can one be cruel to anybody of whom one has once thought like that?

He strolled on, disregarding the rain, thinking of what he would say to her. Never mind pride. Pride is ridiculous; it has no place in the partnership of husband and wife. He was the stronger partner, too: strength cannot be proud in its dealings with weakness. He would just ask her his main question, very gently, and believe whatever she said in reply.

Then he was haunted with the echo of those abominable words—what he had said when he banged out of the room and left her sobbing. Why did she cry like that, if she really knew that he meant nothing at all? He had said that he never wished to see her again; and for the second time he considered the implication that such a wish carried. It was exactly as if he had said he wished for her death. As he thought of it now, he had a sensation of coldness and horror; a superstitious dread for a few moments possessed him, till returning common sense enabled him to shake it off. Absurd! Dark words, impious appeals to destiny, even solemn curses, never yet hurt anybody since the world began.

Then he thought that when he got home to-night he would simply say, "Mabel, I am sorry." He would ask no more questions. He would refuse to hear any explanations—unless, of course, she insisted on explaining—as she would do, probably, for she was always magnanimous.

Then he felt that he could not wait till the evening for all this. He decided that he would go straight home at once. He would just take her in his arms, and say that there was nothing doing at the office and he had come home to give her a treat. He would bring her back to London for a sort of birthday dinner at a restaurant, take her after dinner to a theatre; and they would go home together at last talking gaily of the play—as they used to do years ago.

IT was dusk when he came along the main thoroughfare and approached the corner at the bottom of the side road that led to his house. The rain had ceased and the lamplight from shop windows shone out upon the wet and glistening roadway. Omnibuses and cars lumbering heavily sent the mud squirting to the pavement.

He had walked fast from the station, and now that he was close to home he walked faster still in his eagerness to reach it. Then all at once he saw the crowd at the corner. People were hurrying ahead of him to make the crowd bigger; people were standing at the shop doors gesticulating and talking loudly; people on the tops of omnibuses that had passed the corner were standing up and looking backwards.

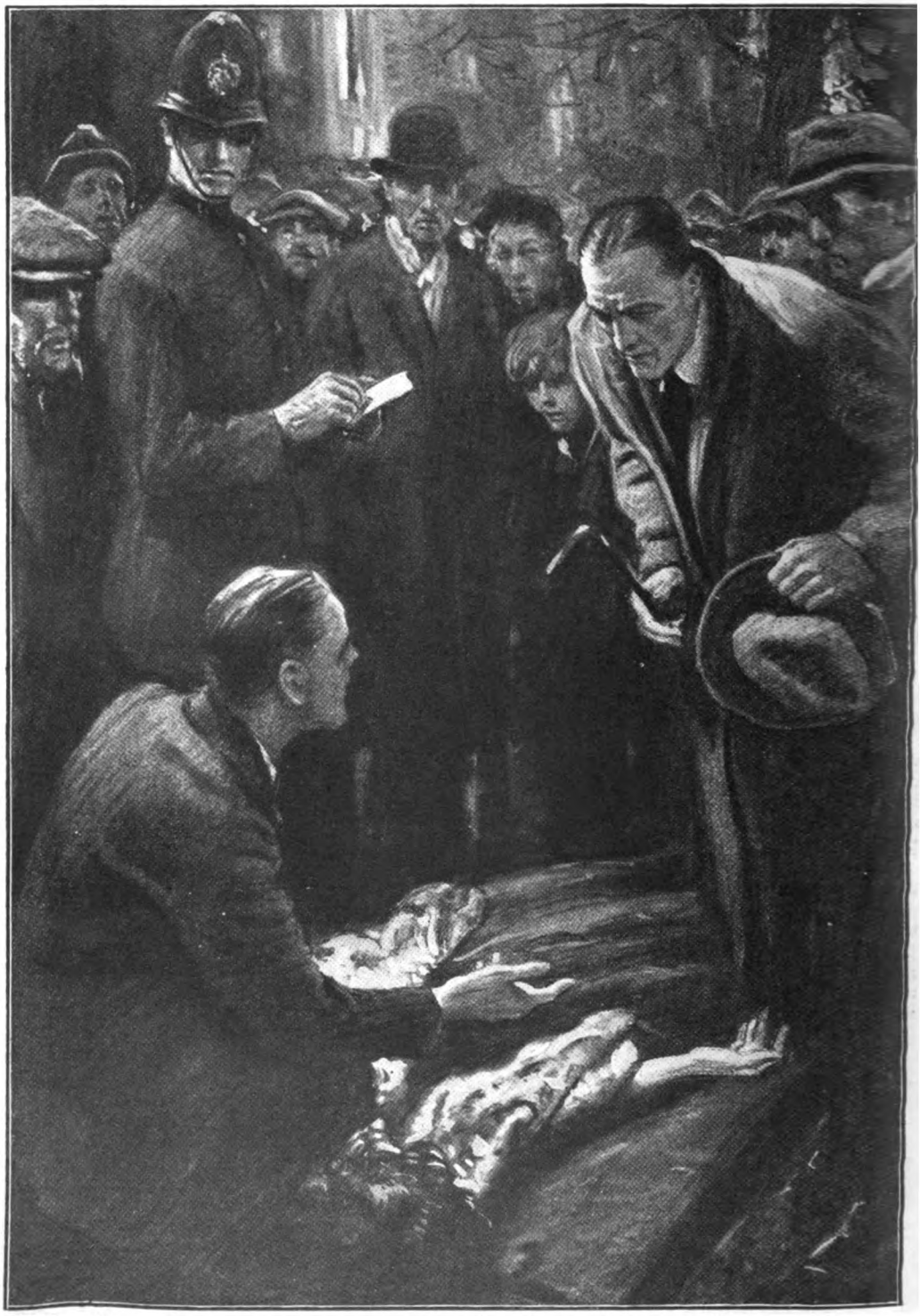
'An accident—There's been an accident—Did you see it?—Somebody killed—A lady run over!"

George Selkirk heard the voices all about him, and began to run. His heart had turned deadly cold under the grip of unreasoning fear. As a man in a nightmare dream, he felt as if there were heavy weights upon his feet holding him motionless even while he rushed on. The familiar scene had become sinister of aspect, hideous, abominable; and in the air itself, from high above his head, or flying to meet him, came a whispering premonition, a yelling certainty of personal disaster. This accident, this ominous crowd, concerned him and no one else.

Next moment, breathless and gasping, he pushed his way through the outskirts of the crowd.

"What is it? I want to know what it is."

"A lady knocked down by a taxi-cab. There, get out of the light. They're going to lift her on the stretcher."



"Breathless and gasping, he pushed his way through the crowd. 'What is it? I want to know what it is.'"

She had been lying on the pavement and policemen had kept an open space about her till the ambulance arrived. Since they pulled her out of the roadway, no one had dared to touch her lest a further injury might be wrought. But now, under the directions of a young doctor from the neighbouring hospital, they were lifting the unconscious form.

In a horrible fulfilment of his superstitious dread, George looked down upon the soiled ermine fur, the violet colour of the cloak all bright in the lamplight except where the wet black stains hid it, and the battered hat with the pretty gold and umber feathers trailing. The face, upturned, was an unrecognizable mask covered with blood and mire.

"Is she dead?"

"No," said the young doctor, "but she may be before we get her to the hospital if we aren't careful. Keep back, please."

George stood by shuddering, feeling dead himself, feeling that he had been dead for a long time and that this was a part of his punishment in another world—to stand by, impotently watching, while strangers handled the lacerated, broken body of the woman he had loved.

She was safely on the ambulance and they began to pull the tent hood over it.

"Stand back, I tell you."

"She is my wife."

"Oh, I am sorry. Then you'll come to the hospital with us, of course."

The hospital was close by, and moving slowly they were only four minutes on the way. But in that brief journey George Selkirk lived his life again right through, and by his agony paid for every smallest fault the life contained.

They took her into a ward and left him waiting, first in the hall and then in one of the doctors' rooms. He might not be with her. He asked to see the doctor that he knew; and this man came to him, told him to keep up his courage, and to wait patiently. He believed it would not be as bad as they had feared. She had not yet recovered consciousness. He promised that if they thought her strength was failing they would summon George without a moment's delay.

Then an hour by the clock passed.

And then his friend came hurrying into the room with a strange excited manner, and put his hands on George's shoulders.

"Selkirk, my dear fellow, keep calm. That poor woman is not your wife at all. No, no, I tell you. I know Mrs. Selkirk quite well. This is somebody else."

George had sprung up, and he stood there livid, shaking.

"But I know the clothes. They are my wife's clothes."

"I can't help that. If they are your wife's clothes, somebody else has been wearing them. Now keep quiet—and come with me and see for yourself. She is conscious, but don't speak to her."

They took him into the ward, led him to the screened bed, and he looked and saw its occupant. Her face was very little injured, in spite of its appalling appearance just now before the blood-stains and mud-stains had been washed away; and it was the face of Edith the maid.

THE mystery explained itself and he soon understood. A short dignified letter waiting for him at home told him that Mabel had gone to her mother at Esher, and that she would remain there until he came and humbly begged her pardon. The absence of the mistress gave the maid another chance of masquerading in borrowed plumes, and she quickly took advantage of it. Once again the reckless, foolish girl had dressed herself with Mabel's choicest finery, and gone flaunting forth to meet her latest sweetheart. Hurrying, vainglorious, but perhaps with some guilty apprehensions, she had been caught by misfortune at that dangerous corner.

An hour or two later George arrived at Esher in a hired motor, and was able then to report that the hospital patient would certainly recover. Two of poor Edith's ribs and one of her arms were broken; but the doctors would patch her up in six weeks' time, and in a couple of months she would again be fit for domestic service.

"With somebody else, I suppose," said George, driving his wife home in the hired car. "But I really think we must give her some sort of character. Poor girl, she has had a lesson—so have I, too, if it comes to that."

He did not formally beg Mabel's pardon; but he said that he was never going to quarrel with her again. And I believe he will keep his word.

"THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME"

by

STAFFORD RANSOME

ILLUSTRATED BY ALFRED LEETE

SCENE: *A London club. Two members meeting.*

FIRST MEMBER: Hallo!

SECOND DITTO: You here? I thought I was the only man in town. You look as if you wanted a change. Come with me to the Continent. I am off to-morrow.

FIRST DITTO: No, thanks; I loathe the Continent. Besides, I do not want to travel; I want rest and domesticity. There is no place like home. I have been living in the club for the last ten days, but I have taken a farmhouse in an out-of-the-way place, and my wife and children are down there. I shall be glad to get away from town for a few days' rest and quiet.

(*Enter waiter with letter on tray, which he presents to First Member.*)

Ah, here is a letter from my wife. Excuse me half a minute. (*Reads to himself.*)

"RUFFIT-UPON-SPLOSH,
July 25th, 1921.

"DEAREST GEORGE,—

"We are all looking forward to seeing you on Friday, and I am sure you will enjoy yourself in this delightfully primitive place. As you know, we are six miles from the nearest station, but you can get a push-bike from the station-master, and as you will have sent down all the clothes you will want, you will not mind that there is no motor to send.

"Jack offered to fetch you from the station on the back of his motor-bike, but I wouldn't have that. It would have been all right if you had registered for insurance against accidents in the *Daily Grouse*, as I told you.

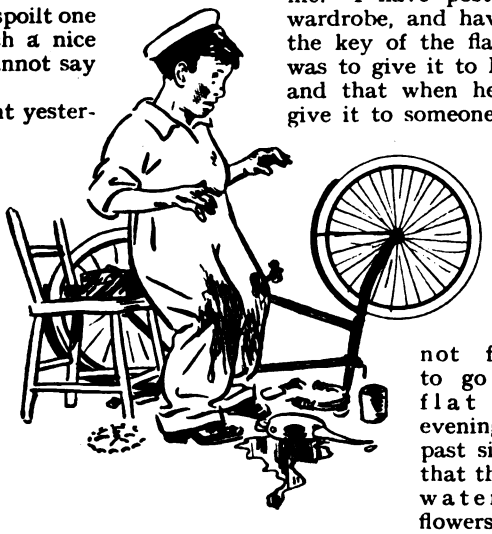
"This is a comfortable old farmhouse, and there are ten bedrooms, but I am afraid you will find us rather crowded, as, besides our own two and the three Wilkinson children, I have taken in two of our dear Rosabella's schoolfellows and Dolly's boy.

"Two of the Wilkinson boys are now sleeping in what will be your room. It is not very large, but it has a big bed in it. I think the best way will be for them to go on sleeping there when you come down, and I will have some sort of a shake-down arranged for you on the floor. You won't mind that for the few days you are down here, and it will be such a comfort to us all; for your being with the boys will stop them making a noise and keeping us awake all night. They have broken two jugs and knocked a hole in the bottom of your bath, and last night they tore their counterpane to shreds.

"Jack has grown such a nice-looking fellow, and it is a pleasure

to have him here, but he has come back a regular rag-bag from Osborne. Happily he is now tall enough to wear your flannels, or else I do not know how we should have got along. They are rather baggy for him round the waist, but Watkins has 'taken a reef,' as Jack

calls it, in them, and they don't look so bad, except that when he was doing something to his bike, which had 'bust its innards,' he upset the oil-can all over himself, and spoilt one pair. But he is such a nice boy that really one cannot say anything to him.



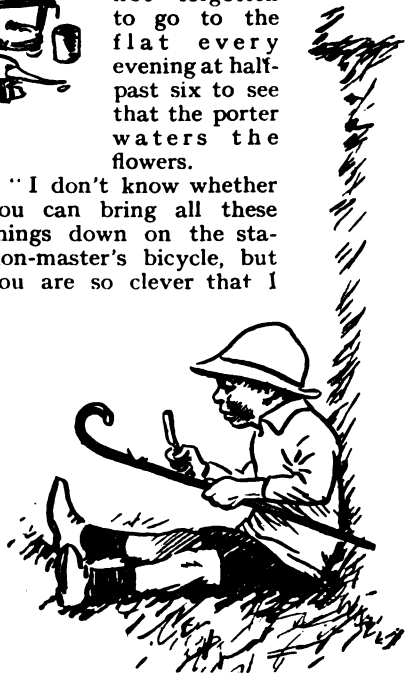
"I had such a fright yesterday. Cyril was very quiet for a long time, and I wondered what had become of him, and at last we found him sitting behind a hay-stack cutting up that walking-stick which used to belong to poor Charlie, and was sent to you when he died. The dear little man was trying to make it into something for a kite.

"Really, he had managed to cut it in two very neatly—he's such a clever little chap. But imagine my horror when I found out what he was doing it with—he was using your razor! I scolded him, for he might have cut himself to death; and I gave the horrid thing to the gardener to throw away. It was really rather thoughtless of you, dear, to send down so dangerous a thing in your luggage. It is not fit for children to play with. Why don't you go in for safety-razors, like everybody else?

"You said that there were some cigars among your things, but I have not seen them. Jack and Kathleen were making an automatic machine out of a cigar-box the other day, but there was nothing in it, except that clicking thing which they had got off your fishing-rod. You had better bring some more cigars down when you come, and at the same time you might bring down some fruit and butter, for, though this is the country, we cannot get anything of that sort here. Then you had better bring some poultry and a sirloin of beef, and half-a-dozen jam-pots, so that we can make some blackberry jam; and two more tennis rackets and John's cricket bat, and Hugh's model of the *'Mauretania'* to sail on the pond. You will easily be able to force it through the front door if you get one of the porters to help you, and take the funnels out.

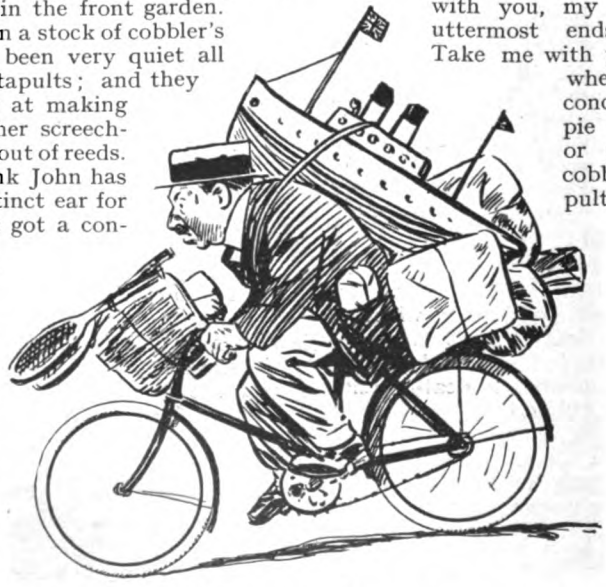
"I want, too, one of my hats, as we have to go to a tennis-party on Saturday to some friends of the Trevethicks, and I have nothing smart down here. It is no good trying to explain which hat I mean to you; besides, I do not want to give you a lot of bother, so I have written to Bertha to ask her to look it out for me. I have posted her the key of the wardrobe, and have told her that I gave the key of the flat to Mrs. Benson, who was to give it to Murphy every Tuesday, and that when he went away he would give it to someone else; but I have told Bertha that you will see that she gets it all right. She will find my hat and pack it up for me, and you will only have to bring it down. I think that is all, except that I hope that you have not forgotten to go to the flat every evening at half-past six to see that the porter waters the flowers.

"I don't know whether you can bring all these things down on the station-master's bicycle, but you are so clever that I



think perhaps you can, although it is rather hilly in these parts. In fact, it is all uphill from the station here, so if you do not care to ride, the postman, who comes up in a sort of farm cart, would give you and the things a lift. You say your train gets here at 4.23; well, he starts about half-past six, and so it will fit in rather nicely, and you will get here in time for dinner, as we can put it off till eight o'clock.

"The children are all wild with delight at the thought of your coming down to them, and a mysterious conference was held last night as to a suitable reception. I heard something about 'an apple-pie bed.' They are so full of fun, bless them! Jack has got some gunpowder somehow—I strongly suspect that the naughty boy has been emptying some of your cartridge-cases again. He might have blown himself up, and then what would Dolly have said? But I do not know what they are going to do with it, though I gather there is going to be a sort of *feu de joie* somewhere in the front garden. They have laid in a stock of cobbler's wax, and have been very quiet all day making catapults; and they are quite clever at making whistles and other screeching instruments out of reeds. You know I think John has developed a distinct ear for music. He has got a concertina, and with this and the whistles, and some home-made clappers and some biscuit tins, they have arranged a jazz orchestra to play on the stairs during the whole of dinner-time on the night of your arrival. So, you see, they have not forgotten you, and have determined to give you a royal reception.



"Now, darling, you know how I hate bothering you about money, but, of course, you did not expect me to manage this place on my regular allowance, and you see that I was right when I said that we had better take this large house, for we are crowded enough as it is, and we should never have got four grown-up people (for Georgina and Alice and Algernon are here too), eight children, a governess, and three servants into that little four-roomed cottage you spoke about. So when you come down bring your cheque-book, and we will talk matters over.

"All the children send their love and kisses, and hoping to see you down here for a few days' rest after all your hard work,

"Your loving wife,
"ISABEL."

(*The First Member mops his forehead and passes his hand through his hair. A groan escapes him, and afterwards he laughs hysterically.*)

SECOND MEMBER: What's the matter, old fellow? Are you ill; is it one of your old attacks?

FIRST MEMBER: Yes! That is, no! Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! I am going abroad with you, my dear boy, to the uttermost ends of the world. Take me with you to some place where there are no concertinas, or apple-pie beds, or clappers, or gunpowder, or cobbler's wax, or catapults, or people to wear my breeches. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! Give me my cheque-book. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! Let me write an order for twenty thousand bonnets before I die. Ha! ha! ha! And then take me away; take me away.

(*Falls heavily into an armchair, subconsciously singing, "There's No Place Like Home."*)

SECOND MEMBER: I think, old thing, you want a double whisky.

[*Curtain.*]

PORTRAITS of CELEBRITIES AT DIFFERENT AGES

Sir W. Robertson Nicoll

WITH AN INTERVIEW

By SIDNEY DARK.

SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON NICOLL is certainly the most popular literary critic of our time—a man quite as learned as his predecessors, but whose ambition has always been, not to castigate poets in the style of the old *Quarterly*, but to persuade the great public to read poetry and to enlarge the circle of sweetness and light. Dr. Johnson must have looked quite as truculent as he actually was. His very presence must have been terrifying. Sir William Robertson Nicoll's appearance suggests his character. He is a tiny, slim man, with a quiet voice and an almost diffident manner. He does not make pronouncements. He is far more ready to persuade than to denounce. He is seventy years old. He has been an active journalist for nearly fifty years—and this month his paper, the *Bookman*, celebrates its thirtieth anniversary. Optimism frequently comes with age. The most confirmed pessimists are still in their teens. But I know no literary man who is quite so enthusiastic an optimist as Sir William Robertson Nicoll.

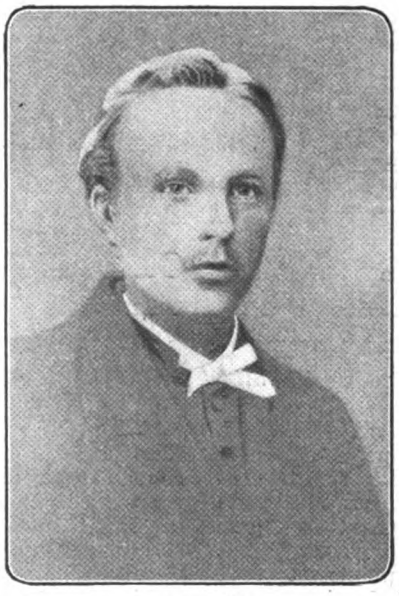
Age 9.

Good frequently comes out of evil, but it can rarely have happened that a severe illness has been the direct cause of a man's professional success. Yet this is exactly what happened to Sir William. He is, of course, a Scotsman—born in Aberdeenshire and educated at the Aberdeen University. For eleven years he was a Presbyterian minister at Dufftown and Kelso. Then came a bad attack of pneumonia, and he was told by the great physician, Sir Andrew Clark, that he would never again be strong enough to earn his living as a public speaker. He went to Switzerland and his lungs got better, and then in 1886 he came to London and persuaded Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, the Paternoster Row publishers, to start the *British Weekly*. While he was still in Scotland Sir William had begun to write for Hodder and Stoughton, and in 1884 he became editor of the *Expositor*, a religious publication, which he has directed ever since. His idea of the *British Weekly* was something entirely new. It was to be at once a religious and a literary paper. Sir William told me that thirty years ago the suggestion that people who went to chapels could be really interested in literature was laughed at.

Sir William is a good Dickensian, but he insists that Dickens was responsible for a gross and common misunderstanding of the character of Nonconformist ministers when he created Stiggins! What may be called the Robertson Nicoll type of minister, with his enthusiasm for literature and culture, is a decided contrast to Stiggins and Chadband.

The *British Weekly* was a bold experiment, and the publishers had no great faith in its success when it was first suggested to them by the pale, frail Presbyterian minister, with his strong Scotch accent and his body weakened by a severe illness. But Sir William lacked neither courage nor faith in himself. He offered to edit and largely to

write the paper for nothing until it began to pay its expenses. Years passed before that happy moment was reached, and during those years he was obliged to earn his living by writing articles, mostly on literary subjects, for other papers.



Age 20.

"I have always been a preacher," Sir William said to me, "and I had to have a pulpit. My strength was not sufficient for ordinary pulpits, and so I had to build my own. I built the *British Weekly*, and I have been preaching from it for nearly thirty-five years."

When the *British Weekly* was firmly established Sir William started the *Bookman*. Through his association with them, Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, who originally published nothing but religious books, have become one of the most important publishing houses in London, and he has consistently used the power that came to him as the conductor of widely circulated papers and as the adviser of an enterprising firm at once to encourage young authors with ability and, by what may be called gentle propaganda, to increase the popular eagerness for good books.

Sir William Robertson Nicoll will live in literary history as the discoverer of genius. One of his finest discoveries was the late Ian Maclaren, the author of "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush." Ian Maclaren was the pen-name of the Rev. John Watson, a Presbyterian minister in Liverpool. Sir William met him continually, and was charmed by the humour and vividness of his talk. Watson was a great story-teller, and his Scotch stories particularly appealed to his fellow Scot. Sir William felt certain that a man who could talk so well must be able to write. As a matter of fact, this does not often follow. Some of the finest talkers I have ever known, the late Charles Brookfield, the actor, being conspicuous among them, have been comparative failures when they have tried to write. But Sir William's instinct, anyway as far as the Rev. John Watson was concerned, was right. He had never attempted to write a story until he was well over thirty, but his first novel, written at Sir William's instigation, was a great success, and a successful career as a novelist came to an untimely end when Ian Maclaren died at the early age of forty-seven.

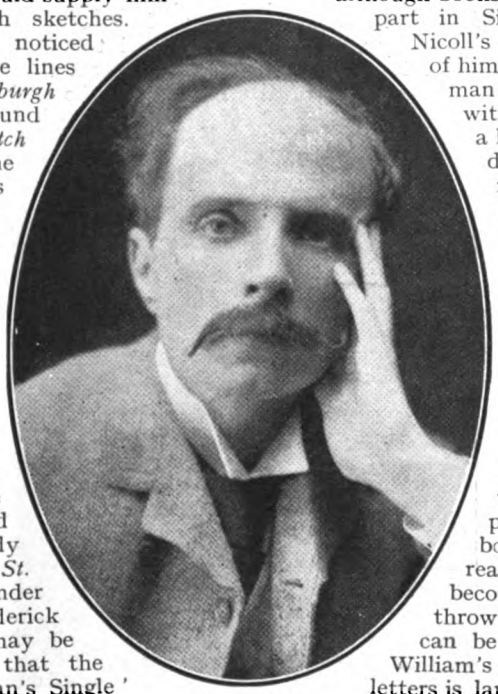
Age 26.

The other well-known Scotch minister and novelist, S. R. Crockett, was not Sir William's discovery, but he was able to give him help and encouragement in his literary career. Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler was another of Robertson Nicoll's finds. Miss Fowler was the daughter of Lord Wolverhampton, a Radical statesman who held office in the Gladstone Cabinets. Miss Fowler had the unique advantage of being at once in society and also a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. She had already shown that she had talent for writing when Sir William first knew her, and he came to the conclusion that she was just the person to write a novel that should deal truthfully with Nonconformist life. This was a book for which Sir William, with his keen instinct, believed there was a genuine popular demand. Miss Fowler listened to the voice of the tempter, and wrote "Concerning Isabel Carnaby," which was published in 1898 and was a great popular success.

Sir William was telling me in his quiet, far-away, almost cooing voice about the men and women writers with whose careers he has been connected.

"The greatest of them all," he said, "and the man whose career I am proudest to have been concerned with, is, of course, Sir James Barrie. Barrie and I have been on very close terms for many years, and it is good to remember that I was able to be of some little use to him when he was beginning."

Sir James Barrie came to London by way of Nottingham, where he worked for some time on one of the local papers. He was already established in London when Sir William first came in contact with him. The editor of the *British Weekly* was bringing out a special edition for Scotland, and he wanted to find a writer who could supply him with humorous Scotch sketches. About this time he noticed articles, exactly on the lines he wanted, in the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*. He found out from the *Dispatch* that the name of the contributor was James Barrie, and then arranged his first meeting with the author of "Peter Pan."



Age 45.

"I was not able to pay Barrie very much in those days," Sir William told me, "but I was able to pay him something, and that something was of importance to a young writer. It is not true to say that I discovered Barrie. He was already writing for the old *St. James's Gazette*, then under the editorship of Frederick Greenwood, but it may be interesting to record that the whole of 'When a Man's Single' and parts both of 'Auld Licht Idylls' and 'A Window in Thrums' appeared in the columns of the *British Weekly*."

It will perhaps appear to be of some importance when the literary history of the last fifty years comes to be written, that the coming of a Scotch critic to London should have played some part at least in the supreme success in England of Scotch imaginative writers. Sir William Robertson Nicoll's attack of pneumonia in 1885 played its part in securing for Sir James Barrie his pre-eminent position in the English literary world in 1921. Sir William has never grown weary of well-doing. A host of younger writers, including Mr. John Buchan (another Scotsman, be it said), have owed much to his encouragement and his help.

Sir William, indeed, is definitely and distinctively Scotch, though he is without the smallest suggestion of the dourness with which Englishmen generally associate the Scotch. Length of years and much reading have left him with an almost pugnaciously cheerful outlook on life. His bookishness was inherited. It is part of himself.

"My father," he told me, "was a Scotch minister, who never in his whole life had more than two hundred pounds a year. But when he died he left a library of seventeen thousand books."

Could any other man on earth besides a Scotsman have achieved such a feat? But although books have played so large a part in Sir William Robertson Nicoll's life, it cannot be said of him that he is a mere bookman who has lived his life within the narrow walls of a library. The man who does nothing else but read books may be able to write about books in a way that is interesting to "booky" people, but the man who is a safe guide to books for people compelled to live ordinary lives under ordinary circumstances must himself be in constant contact with real life and be intimate with the circumstances that produce and inspire books that are of any real value, for books only become valuable when they throw light on life. There can be no question that Sir William's influence as a guide to letters is largely owing to the fact that he has always retained his intimate interest in religion, and that as the years have gone by he has come into close contact with politics and statecraft. Mr. Lloyd George is, of course, himself a Nonconformist, and in recent years it has more than once happened that most important political pronouncements have first been made by the pen of Sir William Robertson Nicoll in the columns of the *British Weekly*.

"Looking back on your long life," I said to Sir William, "do you feel that there is a larger appreciation for literature than there used to be?"

"Most decidedly," was the reply. "There is an infinitely greater demand for ambitious writing. The public is decidedly more critical, and in consequence there is a very marked improvement in popular fiction. Take, for example, the novels of Mr. Phillips

Oppenheim. I read them myself with the greatest possible pleasure. They are intended to amuse and delight the great public, but they are genuine works of literary art, and this fact proves that this great public can no longer be accurately described as an uncritical public."

"Forgetting books for a moment," I said, "and thinking of life as a whole, do you feel that, despite all the troubles and worries of our times, the world is growing better, and that we are, at least, justified in some faith for the future?"

"Most decidedly. Never fear that reason and justice will ultimately prevail. I am a very cheerful person; I feel as I have always felt, that it is my business to try and make other people cheerful, and I have not the slightest fear that I am eminently justified in doing so."

A very wonderful, stimulating, wide-sympathied old gentleman, mentally unaffected by the passing of the years, still enormously interested in the life around him, still full of sympathy, still eager to help!

As I left Sir William to walk down Fleet Street I thought of that other great, vigorous, but unlovely critic who one hundred and fifty years ago dominated the street. Samuel Johnson was perhaps a greater man than Robertson Nicoll (I don't know that he really was, and, after all, these comparisons mean very little), but this at least is certain: it is a kinder world in which Sir William has been a guide than that in which Johnson was a dictator.

A present-day portrait.

Lord Riddell, one of Sir William Robertson Nicoll's oldest friends, is good enough to add to the foregoing the following notes on a great personality and a great career:—

Sir William Robertson Nicoll is unique both for his wonderful memory and his almost unrivalled knowledge of literature. He possesses a combination of dialectical, poetical, and commercial gifts. He has a wide interest in men and affairs. There is hardly anything, indeed, that does not interest him.

Sir William is one of the greatest journalists of modern times. His leading articles are distinguished both for their knowledge and for the skill and charm with which they are written. In addition, he has what journalists call a "nose for news," and many mysterious sources of information.

As has been said, Sir William Robertson Nicoll is a very delicate man, but he has found a mode of life peculiarly suited to his needs. Every week he spends some days in bed, where he works surrounded by newspapers, books, and his beloved cats. It is only recently that he has condescended to use the telephone. Although it might seem that in the seclusion of his house on the heights of Hampstead he is rather cut off from the world, no one is really more cognizant of what is happening behind the scenes.

Sir William is a born gossip, with the art, however, of allowing the other man to have his share of the conversation. He possesses at Hampstead an immense library of books, apparently in huge disorder, which merely implies that they are in constant use. The library which he inherited from his father he keeps in his house in the North of Scotland.

Sir William has a most amazing memory. In writing an article he may require some reference, and he will say to his secretary: "I remember that there was an article on this subject in the *Spectator* about 1867." The reference will be looked up, and it is quite certain that it will be found, if not in 1867, in 1868. One thing only is to be regretted in Sir William Robertson Nicoll's splendidly useful career—that is, that he has devoted most of his time to ephemeral journalism and that he has not written the great history of English literature which he might have written. It is sad to think that his genius has not been enshrined in some permanent work of outstanding value.

THE FAILURE

by

T. JOYCE

ILLUSTRATED BY E.G.OAKDALE

THE car ran into the station as the train went out.

"Oh, dear," said Susan, "that can't be ours!"

"I'm afraid it is yours," said her brother, on the front seat, much amused by this calm exclamation.

"But we'll miss the boat! That's the only train. Oh, no, Harry! It simply can't be ours!"

"Why should it not be ours?" rasped her husband, beside her. "We're three minutes late as it is."

Susan turned pale, and became suddenly anxious. She jumped out as the car stopped, and called to the chauffeur: "Be quick, Jones! We have only a minute."

Harry more leisurely descended, and beckoned to a porter. Anthony Merrick remained in his corner, huddled up in his coat.

"Harry, do tell him to hurry!" urged Susan, in a fret.

"My dear Susy, I tell you you've missed it. That was your train we saw going out when we were coming in."

"Oh, nonsense, Harry. We simply can't have missed it. It's frightfully important; and I never miss trains—not important trains."

Harry merely grinned at these ingenuous remarks, which came from Susan, the most unpunctual of women, with especial point.

"Which platform for the Hull special?" he asked the porter.

"What, sir? The special for the Wibbey Cruises——"

"Fourteen days in the Norwegian Fjords," murmured Harry, with recollections of an advertisement.

"Just gone, sir," said the porter, with relish. "Just this minute." He had been looking forward to this, and even Harry's indifference did not take away all his pleasure.

"Oh, Harry! He can't mean *our* train—not the *boat*-train?" Susan was in great distress.

"'Fraid so, Susy; and, really, I don't think you ought to be surprised. It started late. We ought to have missed it much more easily. If you will take half an hour to put your hat on——"

Susan was too wretched to defend herself from this gross misstatement. Far from wasting half an hour putting her hat on, she had put on her hat in five minutes. The other twenty-five had been spent in answering an important letter from her mother—a letter which simply could not be left unanswered any longer. It would have been cruel to keep her mother waiting perhaps another three days (and foreign posts are notoriously unreliable) for absolutely necessary information about the prices of linoleum and cork carpet, when she had already waited a fortnight.

"Harry," she said, in her most determined voice, "we've got to catch that boat. Anthony simply must have this holiday. It's ordered. He'll have a breakdown if he doesn't get away. I know he will, and he's paid for the tickets already."

"You might catch it at Stavanger."

"No—no, Harry; that's no use. We must catch it properly at Hull. There must be another train——"

"Not another train till twelve, 'm," cried the porter, very badly concealing his joy, "and that's a slow one."

"The car ran into the station as the train went out. 'Oh, dear,' said Susan,

"Then we'll drive," said Susan, with decision.

"Drive?" Harry was almost as much surprised as amused. There was really no end to the comicalities of Susan.

"Yes, Harry; and I'll pay. I ought to pay. It's my fault."

Which was noble of Susan, who did not really believe it to be her fault, but was ready to save other people the irritation of an undetermined responsibility by taking it upon her own shoulders. The thing was an accident, or, as she had been heard to describe similar accidents: "One of those things which *will* happen sometimes."

"Pay?" asked Harry. "What for?"

"The petrol. That's only fair. If we borrow your car all the way to Hull——"

Harry laughed.

"Well, Harry, why not? I don't see anything to laugn at."

Susan's hopes were rising fast. Her new scheme already seemed to promise, like most of her new schemes, to be better than the old. Ill-luck would be turned to account, and missing trains proved a blessing in disguise. "It's much nicer to drive. I hate trains. So does poor Tony. And we could go round by Maysfield and get my dust-coat and that hot-water bottle we left behind. It's really most convenient. I'm not sure, now I think of it, that I didn't leave Tony's medicine on the side-board."

"What will you pay with?" asked Harry, cutting these congratulations short. "Do you mean that Anthony will give you a cheque?"

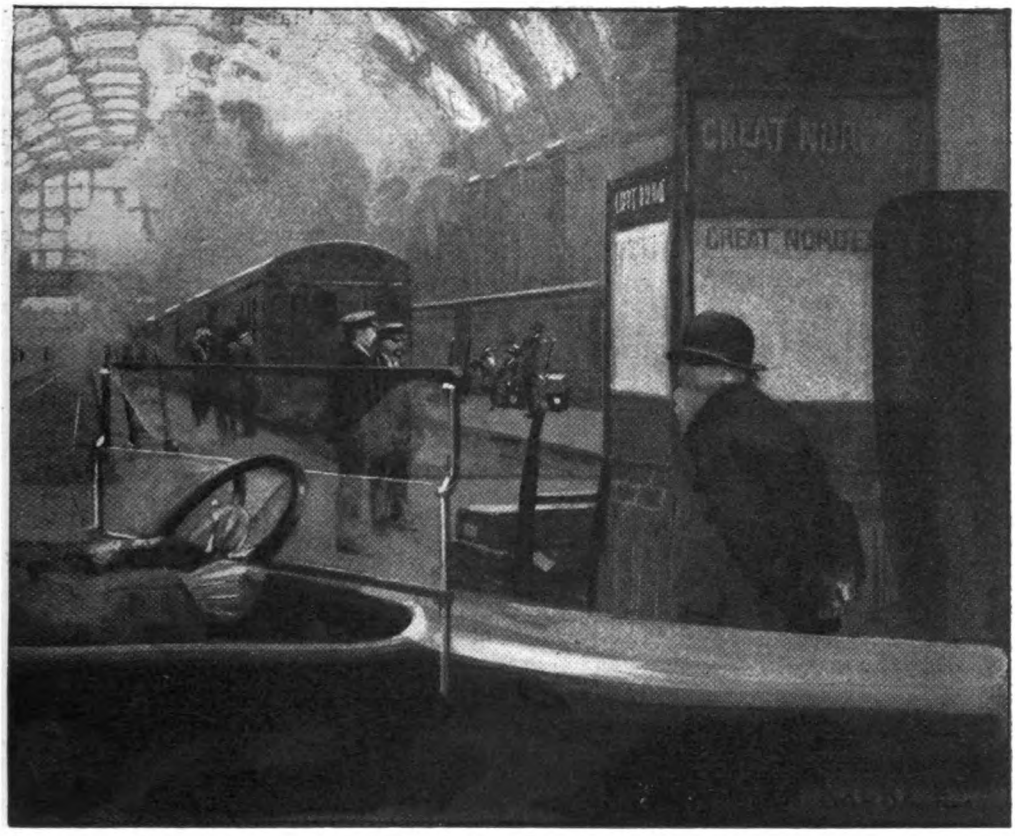
Susan was annoyed by his bantering tone. Harry was a dear brother, but he always took things much too easily. She snubbed him.

"Don't be so nasty, Harry. This isn't a joking matter. Of course I'll pay. Poor Tony—after he has got the tickets and everything—it would be a shame to ask him to pay. It isn't his fault. I insist on paying——"

"But how?"

"Oh! Out of the--I'll get it from the housekeeping money. Don't be so mean, Harry. Are you afraid I ll cheat you?"

"You'll cut down Anthony's meals a bit,



'that can't be ours! We'll miss the boat. It simply can't be ours!'"

and make it that way. It's a grand scheme. But I'm sorry to say you can't get to Hull by road under six hours, and I should think even that would be a record."

"Make a record, then, Harry. Please, Harry. We must catch the boat——"

But her brother was now tired of the joke. It was very amusing to make Susan dance through all her little round of foolish hopes, and confessions, and expedients; it afforded him plenty of justification for his genial condescension with the weakness of human creatures. But when she began to plead, when her lips began to droop, and her eyes to threaten tears, he knew that it was time to seek other relaxations. He replied shortly that they could not possibly catch the boat —not even by aeroplane.

"An aeroplane!" Susan caught at the word, but in a failing voice. Harry's bland countenance told her that he at least would give her no help. She turned to the car.

Anthony was still sitting in his corner. He did not seem to have moved an inch. His gaunt face, which looked even thinner than usual in projection from the wide sweep of his coat-collar, was expressionless to all but those who, knowing it so well, could read its subtleties—the tightening of a muscle beneath the skin, the deepening of a line, the form of a contracted lid. To Harry, his brother-in-law appeared to be admirably cool under great provocation. To Susan, her husband was terrible; her voice quavered when she spoke.

"Tony, darling, I'm so sorry. It seems that *was* our train after all, and Harry says——"

"Get in." He spoke without moving his head, scarcely moving his lips.

"But we must catch the boat, dear; and Harry was saying that if we went by France——"

"We can't go at all." At last he turned his head and looked at her, with dull dark eyes which glowed with anger. "Don't you see that? I told you we had to catch this train. Get in; we'll go home."

"But, Tony, dear, we must——"

"We can't!" He snapped this with such a look of rage that even Susan, without yet understanding the inevitability of cause

and effect, perceived she had better obey him.

She climbed into the car with a very unhappy expression. Harry threw away a half-smoked cigarette, and took his seat in front. They wheeled slowly and drove out of the station.

"I can't help thinking it is very bad management of the steamer people to let the train go before all the passengers had arrived," Susan indignantly burst out, after a short pause of reflection. "No, Harry; don't say it's impossible. It isn't. It can't be. They could easily make some arrangement—in a business-like way. I hate unbusiness-like people——"

But Harry had no intention of saying anything. Both the men were silent.

"Tony, darling, don't look so depressed. You make me feel wretched. It will be all right, I expect. Things nearly always are all right in the end. Perhaps they won't sail today at all; and then, of course, it's just as well we did miss the train. There are several things I've thought of which I'm nearly sure weren't packed in that last awful rush. I know I forgot your medicine for one thing, and perhaps they don't sell that sort of tonic in Norway."

"It is just as well," replied Anthony, calmly.

"Oh! But, Tony, you know you wanted to go frightfully badly. And now you've spent all that money on the tickets and clothes and things——"

"It is worth the money and everything else if it teaches you to be in time."

Susan looked at him with tears ready to fall. "If you knew how I felt——" she protested.

"Why do you do it, then—if it makes you feel badly? Why are you late for every blessed thing? Why can you never manage by any means to do anything properly? Why do you lose your gloves and your handkerchief, or your umbrella or your purse or your way, every time you walk ten yards from your own front door? You can't pack a box without leaving out half the things you want. You can't make a list. You can't check a washing-bill. You can't add two and two together and get the right answer. You can't look after yourself—much less a house. Thank God you haven't children to look after!" Anthony took breath, and ended with something of an anti-climax: "You can't catch a train with a month's notice and four days' preparation."

Susan, very pale, shrank before this outburst as if her husband's tongue was a whip on her shoulders. He glared at her, implacable.

Harry suddenly remarked, in a pleasant, cheerful voice, that he had business in the City, and would take the Tube. He wished them good-bye, begged them to use his car as long as they chose, and got out, taking off his hat to Susan with his usual graceful gesture. Neither had the presence of mind to return his courtesy. They merely gazed at him.

Harry was glad to escape. He did not want to see Susan's punishment. She deserved it—he was glad to think that she would get it—but he did not wish to assist at it. He disliked fuss of all kinds. Besides," he reflected, as he turned into a tobacco-shop in the Euston Road to light his cigar (which did not come from the Euston Road), "it won't do any good. Susan's incorrigible. I'm sorry for poor old Tony. But if he didn't want a wife like that, he oughtn't to have married her. You can't change people—especially women."

HE determined to avoid the Merricks for the next three days. It was generally three days before they recovered from one of these rows. Susan, indeed, after the actual hostilities were over, only suffered from a mild depression; or if not really depressed (she was almost indepressible for any longer period than half an hour) pretended to be in order not to annoy her husband by too rapid and thorough a recovery. For Anthony did not soon recover from a row. The very word offended him—the thing jarred him to the soul. He was extremely unhappy for at shortest three days after a difference with Susan; and since Susan, out of pure kindness of heart, was obliged at least to look unhappy for the same length of time, Harry had justice in his opinion that the Merricks should be avoided during that period.

But that very afternoon about three o'clock he was called by Anthony on the telephone. Anthony was very brief. He only said that Susan had gone, and would Harry come round at once.

"Gone? Where to?" asked Harry.

"I don't know."

"Home—I mean to her mother?"

"I don't know—I think so."

"But why—what's it all about?"

Anthony had rung off, and Harry, who had hoped to escape the necessity of a visit by a few kind inquiries over the wire, followed by an important engagement, was obliged to drive round to Maysfield there and then. He had no anxiety about his sister. Susan had once before, in the early days of marriage, run off home, and forgotten to leave the explanation that her mother had 'phoned for her, and she would be back on Tuesday. This elopement might have a different cause, but probably no worse effect. Susan was always doing surprising things, but she never got into serious trouble.

Anthony was in no very different frame of mind. He also had come to the conclusion that his wife had gone home. But apart from this, his agitation of mind, which was very imperfectly concealed by an air of judicious detachment, was so great that it seemed even pathetic to Harry, who felt really annoyed with his sister from the moment he perceived it. Harry was fond of Susan. He admired her soft prettiness, her lively spirits, her inexhaustible good-nature, and he knew, as only a careful observer of human weakness can know, the worth of her loyal affection. Susan was a girl, as he often reflected, who would stick to him through every misfortune and discouragement; and this is a pleasant thought for any man, unless he is blessed with a good dog. And even then, dogs do not live as long as sisters.

BUT fond as Harry was of his sister, he felt that it was a little too inconsiderate of her to waste her husband's holiday and her brother's time, and desert them both in the same day.

"I shouldn't allow it to worry you, old man," he urged. "She was upset about that business this morning. So she ought to be. She's bolted off home in a fit of remorse. She always used to bolt off to mother when she was in hot water. She'll come back in a day or two, when it's all blown over—that is, when it's cooled down——"

"I don't know about that. Look at this." Anthony gave him a crumpled note. "She left it with the maid to be given to me as soon as I came in from the club. I lunched at the club. Things were impossible here."

Harry nodded in understanding of this impossibility, and read the note :—

> "My dearest,—I've left a letter for you on the mantelpiece in our bedroom, and now it's just struck me you mayn't notice it. It is to explain. I can't write any more now. Good-bye again, my darling.
>
> "Your loving wife,
>
> "SUSAN."

"Well," Harry asked, cheerfully, "and what's in the letter?"

"I can't find it. It certainly isn't on the mantelpiece." Anthony gave a peculiar grin, like a man in some pain. "I expect she took it away with her, or forgot to write it."

"Very likely," Harry agreed, "but I shouldn't worry—not if I were you——"

"But then I am me," retorted Anthony, with another grin. Harry, gazing curiously at him, admitted that this made a difference. He was indeed—so he said, after a moment's reflection—quite struck by this suggestion. It was an original turn of thought. He was just enlarging upon it, in his best conversational manner, when Anthony, suddenly losing that forced grin, continued in a nervous tone :—

"The fact is, Harry, we had rather a bad —row." He used the word with a slight grimace. "I'm afraid I lost my head—and my temper."

"So should I have in the same case," put in Harry, sympathetic to the last. He took out his cigar-case, glanced over its contents, and then returned it to his pocket, as if he had decided that it would hardly do to smoke in the circumstances. His face took a solemn cast. "Yes, it was really a bit rough——"

"It is maddening, isn't it?" cried Anthony, rounding on him to grasp this support.

"Awfully annoying."

"Of course, it's a little thing. I mean it seems a little thing; but when you're married to it—it—it's everywhere." Anthony was incoherent in his efforts to explain. He walked restlessly up and down the carpet. "God knows I appreciate Susan," he burst out, "but—it's not just missing trains—and making a mess of everything—it's the living with it. *Do* you understand?"

He asked abruptly, with so haggard a stare that Harry was obliged, however reluctantly, to see that this was not an ordinary trouble. Something was happening. He was involved. He could not escape participation without revealing an egotism which would be as painful for his self-respect to own as sympathy was exhausting to his nerves. "I do," he said, earnestly, bracing himself to the task. "It's damned hard—damned hard on you, old man." He sighed, and the sigh passed very well for condolation.

"It's like living in an asylum," said Anthony, sombrely, "and you know that people who live in asylums are in danger of going mad themselves. She's mentally deficient. She must be. It's nothing else. Imbecility. And I've come to watch for it in every motion—the way she comes downstairs, or carries her bag, or writes a letter, or reads a book, or pours out the tea. In everything there is the same taint." He paused, and then demanded, in a voice trembling with emotion: "Do you know she spills the lid off the tea-pot every day? Every day. I got a tea-pot with a self-locking lid, but she won't use it. She says it doesn't make good tea—not as good as she likes me to have."

Harry did not smile. The reach of his imagination was enough to tell him that this fact—absurd enough in the relation—might not be at all absurd in the experience of a husband. He pursed up his lips, and gravely nodded his head two or three times.

" Her bag is always open—and her placket. She starts a letter, ' Dear So-and-so,' asks me what she meant to say, and then leaves it on the writing-table for a week. She borrows a book out of my shelf, says it is very interesting, drops it in a bus or a shop, spends a fortnight wondering what she did with it, and then starts another, and repeats the whole process again."

" Susan's always been like that," said Harry, " though she's got her good points. Of course, it's not my business." He cocked his head in humorous deprecation. " But she has her good points. She's never out of spirits ; she's as straight as you make 'em ; and she really has—a capacity for affection. She's very loyal, Susan. But I quite see that it must be difficult—er—to——"

" I oughtn't to say it to you, Harry," Anthony interrupted with another brooding stare, " but I believe it would be better for both of us if she never came back."

HARRY was not shocked. He raised his eyebrows, but he could not feel a proper reprobation. He was always most sympathetic with the nearer person. Unable, therefore, to make a right brotherly protest, he was obliged to look concerned, and say nothing.

" I told her so," said Anthony, coolly.

" Did you ? I say, wasn't that a trifle—er—a bit——? " Harry was really stirred. " She's rather sensitive in some ways——"

Anthony's calmness was not very lasting. The distortion of his features made Harry stop in the middle of his phrase. He swung sharply round, and retreated to the far end of the room, whence he looked into the street for a minute with an attentive brow.

" It's the truth," he said at last, turning again towards Harry at the fireplace, " and unless I can seize something solid—I shall really go mad. It's the solid truth. We only tried to live together because we loved each other. And we've gone on thinking that we ought to put up with misery because we love. But we're destroying ourselves, as well as love. I doubt even if we can love after to-day's—row. Certainly it can't come undamaged out of a tearing brawl like ours of this morning. And it's killing me. A woman can't understand that. She can't understand that it isn't enough to love. I've tried—I've tried a thousand times to make Susan look plainly at facts ; to make her see that facts are facts. But it can't be done."

" I doubt," said Harry, " if that can be done with anyone. Facts are so often only one's own facts. You notice that in politics."

This attempt to take advantage of Anthony's discursiveness, and bring an amiable and impartial tone into the conversation, failed at once. Anthony looked sullenly at him for a moment, and then ejaculated : " I'm glad she's gone. It's better for us both. I won't stir a finger to get her back ; and if she threatens to come back I'll bolt—or shoot myself."

" Yes, yes. I understand. Poor old girl," Harry sighed. " I've often told her she was a bit trying——"

There was a knock at the door, and the parlour-maid, a plump, rubicund girl, at whom Harry had often cast an appreciative eye, came in with a letter.

" For you, sir. I found it in the mistress's coat——"

" Very good." Anthony, dignified, took the letter, and glanced carelessly at the superscription.

" And, sir——"

" Well ? "

" The mistress left her purse, sir."

" Well ? "

" Only she won't have no money, sir. And this bottle she left, too, sir, in her pocket."

The maid, accomplishing at last her climax, produced a large blue bottle and handed it to Anthony. But he was proof against dramatic climaxes. He did not like the theatrical touch, and was always ready to spoil it. He put the bottle on the mantelpiece, and dismissed Betty with a nod.

" Thank you, Betty, that will be all right."

The maid retired slowly, reluctantly ; and left the door ajar. Anthony, with his thumb under the flap of the envelope, glanced at the door. Harry crossed the room to shut it.

" What's that ? " he asked, pointing at the bottle of which the red label was now apparent.

" Oh ! Something she uses for stains."

Little Betty had suffered a disappointment. She felt a deep grievance when Anthony first took her news and the letter so coolly, and then caused the door to be shut with such insulting precaution. It is very trying to be in a house where one of these events, which can be classed as newspaper news, is happening, and to be shut out from all participation. That is very like injustice—a robbery of the fruits of merit. For the distinction between luck and merit is not always clear even to an inquiring mind, and was certainly never made in Betty's. She was embittered, for her instinct, like a terrier's nose, told her she was missing sport. She had seen her mistress leave the house that afternoon, about an hour before, and had been immediately convinced by her appearance that this was a quite different affair from the ordinary clashes of an ordinary household. A quiet girl, from a rural parish in the county of Shropshire, she was well

"Susan left the support of the policeman's arm and threw herself into Anthony's."

fitted by imagination and reading to expect the worst. She was fond of Susan, and this heightened her expectation of tragedy. A sound dramatic sense told her that the victim of a tragedy should be lovable.

The peacefulness of the house had depressed her ever since Susan's flight. She was, as she told the cook, "almost fretted to death," and declared that "nothing at all might be happening for all you could tell."

But even Betty was satisfied by the expressions of Anthony and Harry when they came out of the sitting-room a couple of minutes later and, missing Harry's car, called her to know where it had gone.

They were men not only thoroughly frightened, but in a tearing hurry. Anthony snapped at her, Harry took her by the arm, and strove to use his most persuasive tone. Betty, deliciously agitated, could give them no answer at all. Until Anthony, cutting Harry short, took her by the other arm and scowled so frightfully that in pure terror she managed to find her tongue, and stammered that she thought the man had gone round to the Coach and Horses for his tea. Please would they let her go and see?

"Ah! Sir, I'll find him at once. Poor mistress. Let me run, sir. I knows the way——"

But they did not wait. Anthony took a flying leap from the steps; Harry caught him up in a dozen strides, and the pair vanished round the corner with the usual ludicrous appearance of men in modern coats and trousers who run faster than their clothes were made for. Betty followed breathless, flying her apron like a flag. But the car passed her at forty miles an hour, Harry driving, before she reached the corner, and she concluded one of the most delightful passages of her life with a burst of tears and a mild attack of palpitation.

ANTHONY lay back in the car with a face as still as stone, and almost as white. Harry, in spite of his preoccupation with the driving of the car, showed much more agitation in his face. It seemed to him the most wondrous piece of ill-luck, of injustice, that could have happened. A sister—and a sister he was fond of—to commit suicide. In all the dozens of families of his extensive acquaintance he did not know one afflicted by a suicide. The thing had been aimed at his peace of mind with most devilish malice. This was his penalty for having a sister and being fond of her, and enjoying peace of mind in spite of her. He had not allowed her vagaries to make him unhappy, and now she was avenged. For no one but Susan would have thought of killing herself for incompetence. No one but a most incompetent girl would ever be forced to such a remedy.

His mind turned back upon her letter with a pitiful disdain. "What a letter—just the sort she would write! And fancy writing a letter at all. She can't even put herself out of the way without making a mess of it."

Harry was moved out of himself. He was careless of self-respect. He thought the true thoughts of Harry, and it is a tribute to his brotherly feeling that among all his natural indignation he could still be sorry for his sister, and wish to save her not only for his own sake, but at least a little for hers. He drove fast and well, with a very unaccustomed disregard for his car and his own safety.

This letter was certainly characteristic of Susan, both in conception and composition. It spoke so clearly to her husband in every word, and in the turn of each phrase, in the very stops, that he remembered her in the moment of reading. For Anthony had not had a letter from Susan since his marriage, and from then, like other men who marry, he had begun to forget his bride. He had begun to lose the woman in the wife and the housekeeper. He knew that well enough when he read the letter of the woman. He knew, too, how much he wanted the woman, in spite of the faults of the wife.

"My dearest (Susan wrote),—It is quite true what you say, that I am no good to anybody. I often thought so before, when I have done stupid things, but you were so good not blaming me that I used to think perhaps you hadn't noticed, and that I wasn't worse than other people. I see what I am now. I am a burden on you and everyone else; and it's no good me trying to reform, because I have tried over and over again and I can't. I thought I didn't know I couldn't, but now I know I do. My darling, you say it would be better if we were apart, and I see that too. I only make you unhappy and wear you down. Everybody would be better without me. I have only done harm to people and bothered them all my life. I didn't mean to, and I thought that, because I really loved you, I must be able to help you. But now I see that someone who did not love you at all but had more sense than me and could do things for you properly would make you happier. I am going away for always to show that I can help you, dear. It is no good looking for me or coming after me. I am going to do this one thing properly, if I have spoilt everything else. I shall drink something first, and then jump into the river. I have chosen a place where no one will see, and there aren't any bridges for anyone to

look over—the place where we first met. Darling, I shall think of you there. Think of me, because I am being good for you at last. Please don't tell the police. I don't want to get into the papers.

"Darling, your ever loving

"SUSAN."

THIS place mentioned by Susan was well known to Anthony. He had first seen her on the Embankment in Cheyne Walk, pposite the bust of Rossetti. It was recol-ected because both of them had once liked o compare it with the riverside meeting of)ante and Beatrice in the famous picture of he Tate. As the car turned out of Beaufort treet along the Embankment he suddenly ame to life, and thrust himself half out of he window to look before.

"There's a crowd," said Harry, surprised t the calmness of his own voice.

"What?" Anthony could not hear him n the rush of the air.

"A crowd—there—that's about the place, sn't it?"

Anthony pushed himself out still farther to see this crowd—a small and immobile group on the kerb of the outer pavement next the Embankment wall. As soon as he saw it he tried to open the door, and Harry only pulled up in time to prevent him from falling. But they were within a few steps of the place.

"What is it?" asked Anthony of a stolid-looking man in a top-hat while he shouldered past. The man stared at him, startled by his look and voice.

"Oh! There's an accident—a lady——"

Anthony was past. Harry heard this, and at once his heart sank.

"What's the good? Might as well have stayed at home. Poor Susan——" was his thought. He followed in Anthony's broad wake through the watchers, but only because nothing else suggested itself to be done. He was indeed already fearful of what might be found in the centre, but did not hit upon the remedy of turning back.

"Move on, there—move on!" A policeman suddenly disturbed the crowd from the middle. It loosened itself, and Anthony, with Harry still at his back, was able to burst through the last barrier.

"Now, then—what d'you want?" The policeman had decided it was time to assert himself, and began on the nearest, but Susan at the same moment left the support of his arm and threw herself into Anthony's.

"My dear," she sobbed, "I meant to—I really meant to. But I forgot the bottle in my other coat——"

"And that the tide was out," remarked Harry, glancing over a wide expanse of brown mud.

"And then I slipped on a piece of peel, and I think my ankle is broken—and all these people came——"

"Are you the lady's husband, sir?" said the policeman, very affable. "Well, she's had a bit of a fall. It's a sprain; nothing very serious, but it's upset her a bit, and she wouldn't give me any address, and she wouldn't go to the hospital on any account, and she wouldn't have a cab or a ham-bulance——"

Harry cut short this history of a difficult problem with a couple of half-crowns. Susan was supported to the car, and the party drove off amid a thin cheer from two telegraph boys and the man in the tall hat, who, feeling still a rancour against Anthony for his hasty and uncourteous behaviour, made his hurrah as derisive as possible by sounding it through his nose.

HARRY has not quite forgiven Susan for her attempt upon his happiness; and Anthony will never cure himself of a private swear when the lid falls off the tea-pot; but on the whole they manage to be pretty good friends, even after the climax of reconciliation is followed by the anti-climax of life as before. This is alone a great accomplishment, for Anthony and Susan suffer from the only irretrievable misfortune of love—the character of the loved.

PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

571.—BUYING TOBACCO.

A CORRESPONDENT informs me that he recently went to buy cigarettes and tobacco. The cigarettes cost the same in shillings and pence as did the tobacco in pence and shillings, and the change out of a ten-shilling note was the same as the cost of the cigarettes. What was the cost of the cigarettes?

572.—ANOTHER VICTORIAN ENIGMA.

THIS enigma was published in a book in 1850 and the words added, "Answer unknown." I will give my own answer next month. Perhaps some reader can find a better one. (I will here explain that the delay in dealing with correspondence in these cases arises from the fact that the magazine goes to press some time in advance. My own solutions are in fact in print before the puzzles themselves are read by the public.)

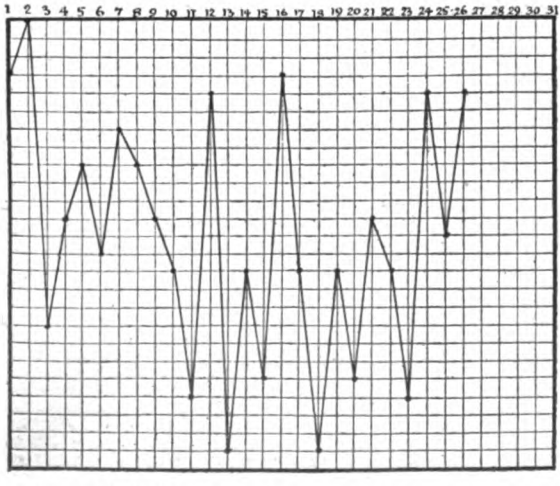
Cut off my head and I shall still be found,
Though somewhat shorter, still the same in sound.
Cut off my tail, I still remain the same;
Bereft of both, I will not change my name,
Not e'en if you deprive me of my middle.
Now, lest as me you would considered be,
I pray you quickly to find out this riddle.

573.—FIND THE FACTORS.

FIND two whole numbers with the smallest possible difference between them which, when multiplied together, will produce 1234567890.

574.—A SAD CASE OF NUR(S)ITIS.

A DOCTOR was making his rounds of the wards of a hospital with the pretty matron when he, in due course,

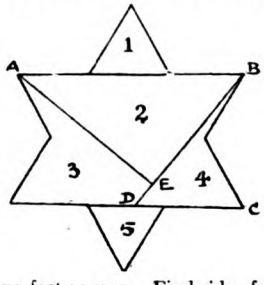


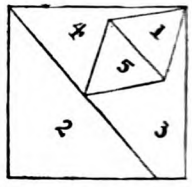
arrived at the bed of a patient who was a draughtsman by profession. He was amusing himself by drawing charts. The doctor glanced at the chart that we reproduce, and then, turning aside, said to the matron, "If that is his temperature chart he must be in a bad way." "Yes, doctor," she replied, "I am afraid he is." She also could read the chart. Can you?

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

567.—SQUARING A STAR.

I GIVE the very neat solution by Mr. E. B. Escott, of Chicago, Illinois. The five pieces of the star form a





perfect square. Find side of equal square (a mean proportional between A B and B C) and make B D equal to such side. Drop perpendicular from A on B D at E and A E will equal B D. The rest is obvious.

568.—ALPHABETICAL SUMS.

THE answer is as follows:—

```
35 ) 19775 ( 565
     175
     ---
      227
      210
      ---
       175
       175
       ---
```

It is clear that R cannot be 1: it must therefore be either 5 or 6 to produce the R in the second line. Then D must be 0 to give the V in the fifth line. Also M must be 1, 2, 3, or 4, if R is 5, but may be 5 if R is 6. Again, S must be an even number if R is 5, to make D a 0, and if R is 6, then S must be 5. When we have discovered and noted these facts, only a little trial is necessary.

569.—MR. GRINDLE'S GARDEN.

THE rule is this. When the four sides are in arithmetical progression the greatest area is equal to the square root of their continual product. The square root of 7 × 8 × 9 × 10 is 70·99, or very nearly 71 square rods. This is the correct answer.

570.—A NEW WORD CHAIN.

IN the following chain every one of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet is represented once and once only among the capital letters, and they are all good dictionary words:—

QuakeresSlaVieWaXanthosiAraBoraciCoDandrut-
FacEgGoldfincHadJailoRadiInKeeLoaMaNOrmo-
lUPeaTopaZanY.

Xanthosia is a genus of plants, and Hadj is, of course, a pilgrimage to Mecca.

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is an argument
in favour of Van Houten's,
the best of all cocoas.

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Fancy Damasks..	..	4/11 ,, 8/11
Tapestries ..	.	12/9 ,, 27/6
Reps and Mattings	..	4/11 ,, 11/6
Poplins	..	4/11 ,, 10/6
Madras Muslins	..	2/11½ ,, 11/6
Artificial Silk Mixtures		8/11 ,, 18/6

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Wax

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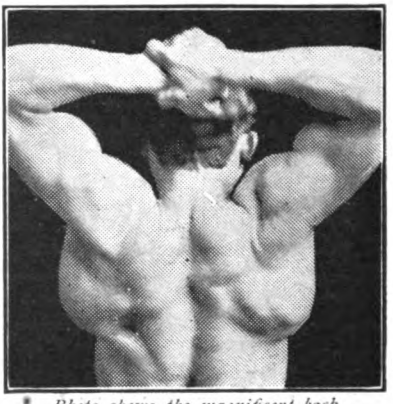
Measurements.

Chest, 37in. (expanded). Neck, 14½in. Biceps, R. 12in., L. 11¾in. Thighs, 20in. Calf, 12½in.



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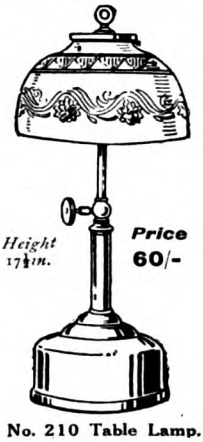

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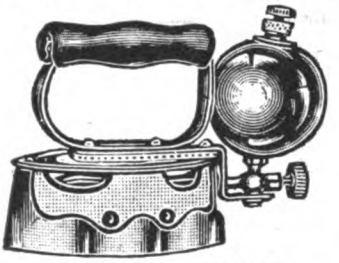

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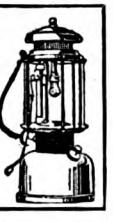

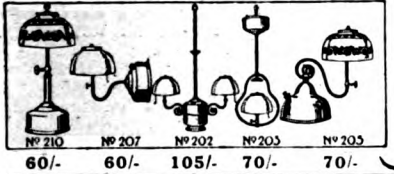

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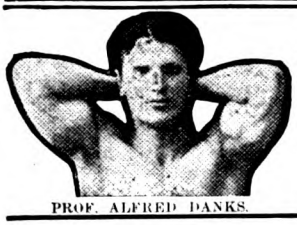

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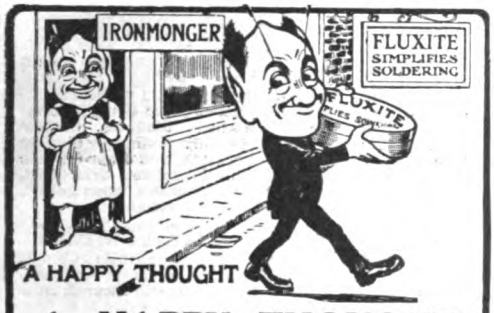

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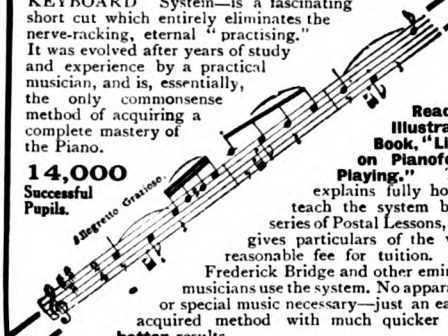

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I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands around their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret?

Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf, or dandruff.

My Hair Grew Again.

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian Elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly.

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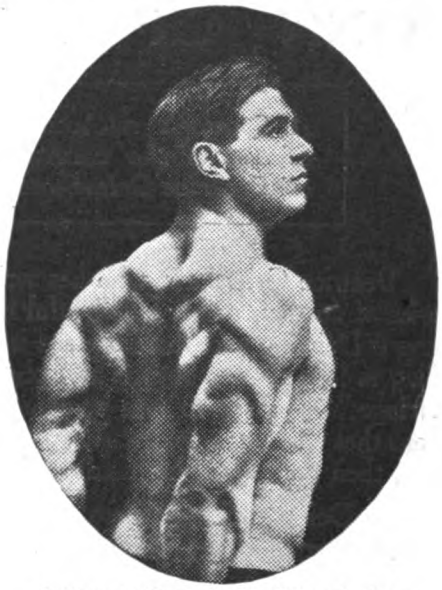

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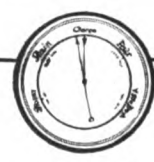

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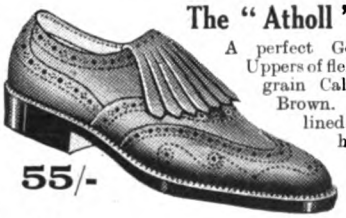

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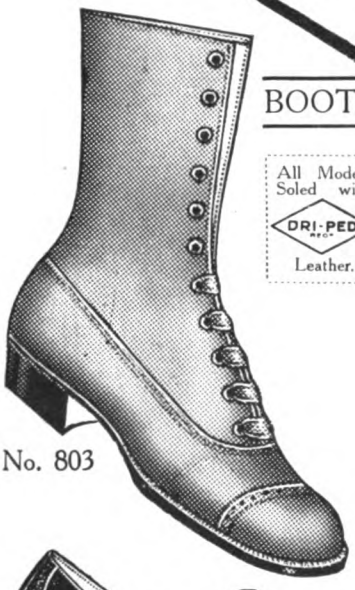

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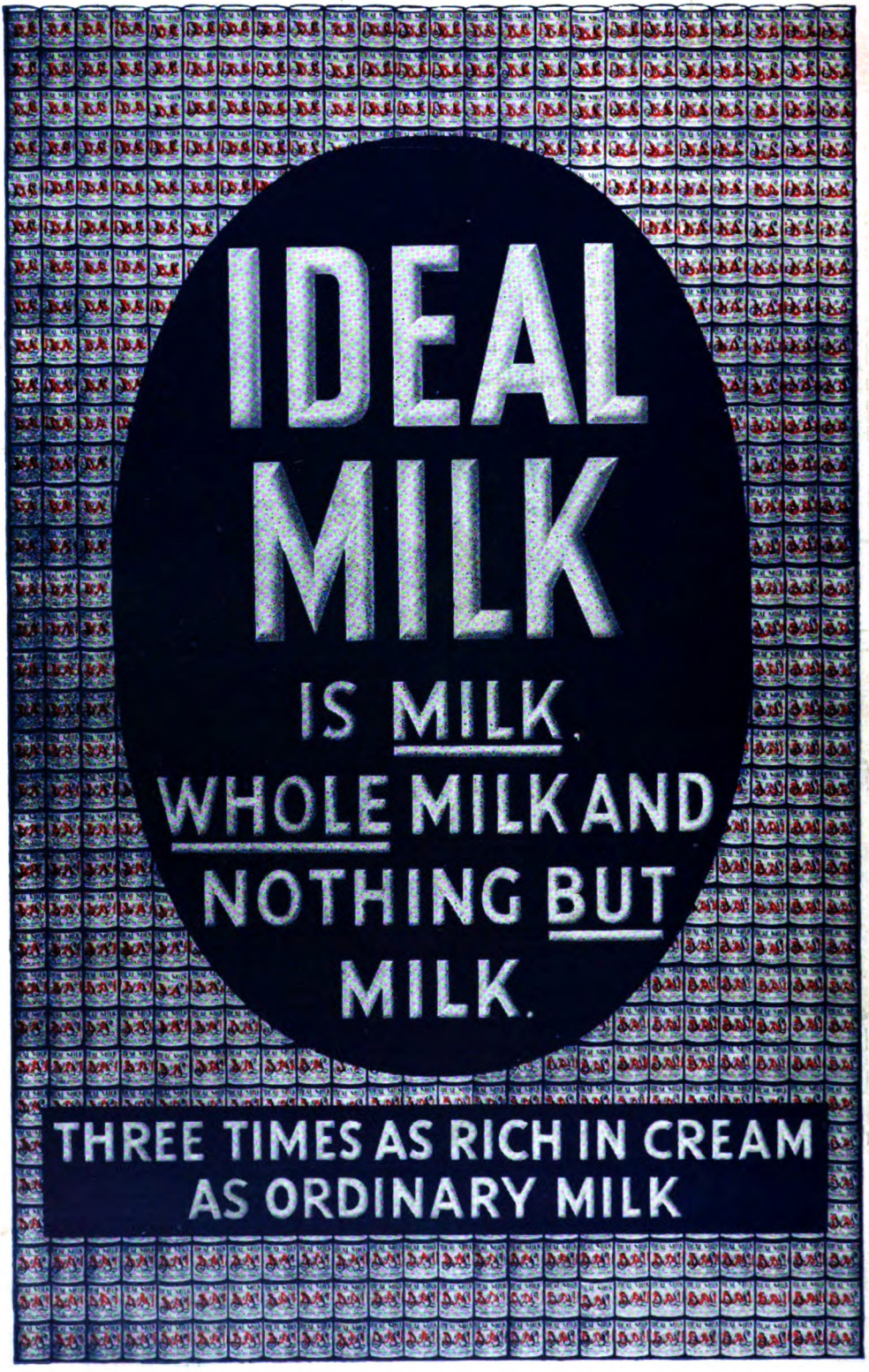
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November, 1921.

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7 (a) Clerk
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(c) 150 per cent. increase

8 (a) Stores Ledger Clerk
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(b) Accountant to Limited Company
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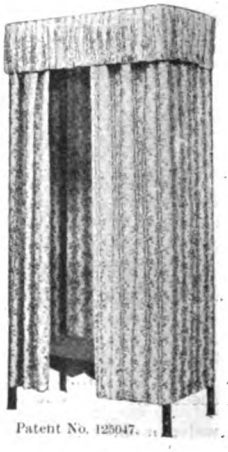
The Stanley Reclining Chair, adjustable to three positions. Strongly made and Stained Oak Colour. Upholstered Seat, and loose Cushion at back in Blue, Brown, Fawn, Green, Grey, or Red Corduroy. **35/-**

The STYLCRAFT WARDROBE.

The Stylcraft Wardrobe is a novel and inexpensive substitute for the ordinary high-priced wooden Wardrobe. It gives identically the same service, at a fraction of the cost, and imparts to the Bedroom an air of delightful freshness and charm. Consists of folding wood frame with bottom part, shelf, and row of hooks. Draped in beautiful Cretonne. Easily dismantled. Size 3 ft. wide. Price **77/6**

All goods carefully packed and sent carriage paid in Great Britain.

Satisfaction guaranteed or money back.



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Carriage paid on all Orders in Gt. Britain.

Established for nearly a century.

The NORBURY Settee Bed.

A Settee by day and a Bed by night.

Just the thing for bungalows, cottages, small houses, and where bedroom accommodation is limited. Extremely useful for putting up unexpected visitors. An attractive and handsome piece of Furniture as well as a delightfully comfortable bed. Made in Oak on Jacobean Lines. Size 6 ft. 6 ins. by 2 ft. 3 ins. Includes wire spring, wool mattress, and two pillow-cushions, covered in fine-quality Tissue Cretonne to customer's own selection. Book of Patterns sent free on application.

PRICE **£8 : 8 : 0** ONLY.

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Perfume of Freesia

A fascinating Perfume giving to perfection the distinctive and alluring beauty of the fragrance of the Freesia flower.

THE FREESIA SERIES also includes Face Powder, Brilliantine, Hair Lotion, Toilet Water, Bath Salts, Talcum Powder and Toilet Soap.

PRICES :

Perfume - 5/-, 8/6, 11/6, 21/- per bottle.
Powder - 3/6 per box.
Bath Salt Tablets - 3/- per box of 1 dozen.

Of all Chemists and Stores, and from

YARDLEY & CO., LTD.,
8, NEW BOND ST., LONDON.

Perfumers by Appointment *To H.R.H. The Prince of Wales.*

Lovely Cumberland Prints by Allen's

Allen's Cumberland Print Cretonnes include designs representing the best schools of English and Continental Art, printed by British master-craftsmen on high-grade fabric, thoroughly sound and economical in wash and wear. 31ins. wide from 1/11½ yd., 50ins. from 8/11. Shadow Prints from 4/11.

Most artistic homes contain rooms which demand the old-world charm of rich tapestry effects, or the "clean" freshness of gay chintz colourings. These are rooms for which the beautiful and harmonious designs of Allen's Cumberland Print Cretonnes were expressly created.

¶ Master-craftsmen have recaptured in these lovely fabrics the mellow tone-poems of the XVth century, the dainty "conceits" of the Charles' days, and the rich riots of full colour evolved in later times. *You do not know how beautiful cretonne or shadow-tissue can be until you have seen a Cumberland Print by Allen's.*

PATTERNS ARE LOANED FREE.

Allen's will gladly send pattern books of Cumberland Prints post free on loan to any address. There are a hundred and one uses for these lovely Cretonnes in every home, from dainty Vanity Bags and Cushion Covers to Curtains, Loose Covers, Bed Draperies and so on. *You cannot fail to make a successful choice.*

Write to-day to

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STYLE 4027.
Black calf lace boot, with double soles and Broadway full toe.
Price 42/-
Also in brown (4110) same price.

MADE ONLY BY THE
SAXONE SHOE CO. LTD.
London: 5 & 6 Coventry St., W.1;
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And all large towns.

Your Outfit for the Winter Sports
should certainly include a pair of
FOX'S PUTTEES.

They are hygienic—giving full weather protection, warmth combined with the necessary ventilation—perfect ease and comfort.

The spiral fit and non-fray edges ensure neatness and smartness—the super-quality material guarantees both long wear and good appearance.

Made in many Shades for both LADIES' and MEN'S Wear.

FOR LADIES :	per pair.	FOR MEN :	per pair.
With Spats	12/6	Regulation Heavy-weight,	9/-
(detachable 1/- extra).		Extra Fine Light-weight,	11/-
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CAUTION.—See that the name 'FOX' is on the metal discs (right and left), attached to every genuine pair of FOX'S New Non-Fray Spiral Puttees.

Patentees & Sole Manufacturers:
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(F.I.P.—Fox's Improved Puttees) "Non-Fray-Spiral."

3-PIECE SUITES

Settee and Two Easy Chairs

In Tapestry to customers' selection. Patterns on application.

EASY PAYMENTS

£3 down and 25/- monthly

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The "Hendon."

THE "HENDON" £32 : 10 : 0
THE "ETON" £42 : 10 : 0

Carriage paid to railway station nearest your residence.

If not approved of can be returned and money refunded.

DESCRIPTION :—Both suites are of comfortable, full size. The "Eton" being the largest, has also loose down cushions—same are upholstered in woollen tapestry of serviceable quality and artistic designs—interior work is soundly carried out, care being taken that wear and tear is well guarded against The best of springs, flock and canvas only being used. All pieces being mounted on reliable castors.

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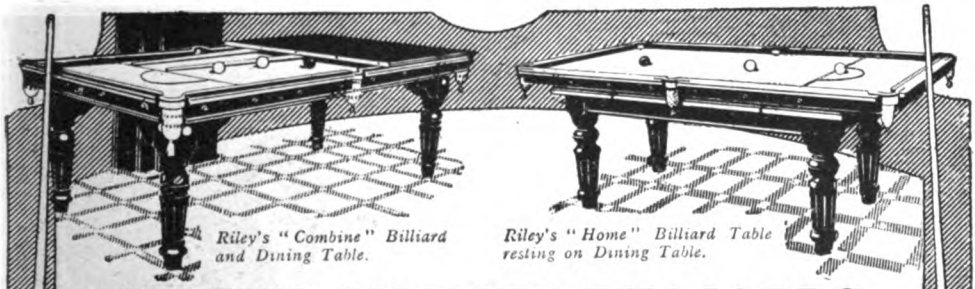

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Riley's "Home" Billiard Table resting on Dining Table.

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A Splendid Billiard Table in your home, for a small first payment of 15/-.

We will send a Riley "Home" Billiard Table—an exact miniature of a full-size table—to your home, strongly packed, and carriage paid if you live in the United Kingdom within one mile of a railway station. You may play on it for seven days, and then if you are not satisfied—pack it up, advise us, and we will have it removed.

15/- DOWN brings to your address the £12. 10. (6 ft. 4 in. size) "Home" Billiard Table. The remainder you pay in equal monthly instalments whilst you play.

Riley's "Home" Billiard Tables fit securely on any dining table. They are sent complete with accessories and ready for play. Prices from £8, or in 18 monthly payments.

Riley's "Combine" Billiard & Dining Tables—handsome as a dining table and perfect as a billiard table. All accessories included. Prices from £27. 10. Can be had for 20 monthly payments.

SEVEN DAYS' FREE TRIAL.

Write for price list:

E. J. RILEY, LTD., Crane Works, ACCRINGTON.

London Showrooms: 147, Aldersgate Street, E.C.

Makers of the World-famed "Riley" Full-size Tables.

Repairs and Accessories of every description. Write for particulars.

Player's
"COUNTRY LIFE"
Tobacco & Cigarettes
"AT NOONDAY"
after
Stanhope A. Forbes. R.A.
P908
ISSUED BY THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO Co (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD

"—the CHANGE has done him NO good!"

Do you know why? He is starving!

This sensational fact is indisputable in the case of all children who fail to prosper. It is confirmed by the recent official report of the Ministry of Health. Modern Biological research proves that many foods don't feed. Nature demands Vitamines, and many foods are almost totally devoid of them.

There are three known Vitamines: *a.* Fat Soluble, Growth Factor; *b.* Water Soluble, Anti-neuritic; *c.* Water Soluble, Anti-scorbutic.

"Vitmar" contains all three.

"Vitmar" is the new and powerful vitalizing food. It is free from drugs and is delightfully palatable. Children love it. A small quantity 3 times a day acts like magic. It is the very soul of food. Children start growing big, lusty and strong immediately they take it. It is *the* ideal food for the young in cases of malnutrition, wasting diseases, rickets, and is invaluable in neurasthenia, for nursing mothers, invalids, and in convalescence.

Send for free sample jar.

SAMPLE

Send Postcard (stamped with ½d. stamp) to-day for a jar of Vitmar, which will be sent by return, with interesting literature, absolutely

FREE

In jars, at all Chemists. Price 2/3, 4/3, & 8/-

VITMAR
VITAMINE CREAM
FOOD
POWERFUL VITALISING

CALLARD & CO.
(Callard, Stewart & Watt, Ltd.)
Food Specialists,
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FOR INFANTS, INVALIDS, AND THE AGED

DRUMMER DYES

The Drummer Sticks to his Colours

When you dye with Drummer Dyes, following the simple directions given on each packet, you secure exactly the colour you want — true, even, fixed. Subsequent washings and exposure to sunshine do not affect the shade a whit—for Drummer Dyes are Fast in every one of the 25 beautiful Colours:

Light Blue	Shell Pink	Daffodil
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From all Grocers, Stores, Oilmen, and Chemists.

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Jaeger Pure Undyed Camelhair Dressing-gown.
Corded Sky, with Sky girdle,
24in., **44/6**; to 50in., **87/6.**

JAEGER
Pure Camel Hair

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Jaeger Agents in every town and throughout the British Empire.

Bolsheviks spare Englishwoman's life in exchange for a Ciro Pearl Necklet.

The following letter is eloquent proof of the wonderful resemblance of

Ciro Pearls

to the real gems, and is certainly one of the most remarkable tributes to their realism that we have yet received.

"I think you will be interested in the following adventure a string of your pearls underwent. A few months ago I escaped from Russia, but when near the border of Finland, I was stopped by a party of murderous Bolsheviks. They demanded money, but I was penniless—hidden in my hair, however, was a string of Ciro Pearls with a diamond clasp. I had kept it hidden because it was given to me by a dear friend, who became a victim of the Bolsheviks. I offered the necklace, but even then I was hauled before a Commissar, and he enquired were the pearls of value. I replied, 'Of great value.' They examined them with greedy eyes, and one yelled, 'They have a beautiful lustre.' I was saved, and but for that string of Ciro Pearls, I would have been shot. My gratitude to your pearls you can guess."

This is one of a series we are about to publish of striking testimonials to the reproductive qualities of Ciro Pearls.

On receipt of this letter, we invited the writer to choose a necklet to replace the one she had forfeited. We learnt from her, however, that she had already secured another, which she looked upon as her talisman. She added that we were at liberty to use her letter, and she would be delighted if its publication increased our sales. In conclusion she stated: "My interrogators had been stealing jewels for a considerable time, and I think that their being deceived is ample proof of the beauty of Ciro Pearls."

For one guinea you also may have a facsimile of a valuable real necklet.

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea, we will send you a Necklet of Ciro Pearls, 16in. long, or a Ring, Brooch, Earrings, or any other Jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls (complete with case). If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former, or superior to the latter, return them to us within seven days and we will refund your money. Other lengths at proportionate rates — Gold Clasp 2s. 6d. extra.

Descriptive Booklet No. 12, containing illustrations of all Ciro Pearl Jewellery, sent post free.

Warning.

We warn the public against unscrupulous advertisers who imitate our name and copy our advertisements in the hope of misleading the unwary to purchase substitutes as Ciro Pearls. We have no agents and no branches in England, and would be glad if clients would inform us if they have been deceived.

CIRO PEARLS, LTD. (Dept. 12), 39, Old Bond Street, London, W.1. (Piccadilly End).

Our Showrooms are on the First Floor over Lloyd's Bank.

Indian Branch - - - - 7, Esplanade East, Calcutta.

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"Atora" Refined Beef Suet is the best fresh beef suet, refined, sterilised, absolutely pure and wholesome. It keeps sweet for many weeks, although no preservatives are used. It is more digestible than other fats, it does not repeat or cause heartburn.

"Atora" gives the advantages of cream for growing children, supplying the pure fat-food elements necessary for healthful development, sound teeth, etc. For these reasons

"ATORA"

The Handy Suet

should be used daily in your homes, in puddings and pies, in cakes and for all cooking purposes. *ATORA reduces the cost of living* and *raises the standard.*

"Atora" is sold by all Grocers. SHREDDED for Puddings and Pastry. In BLOCKS for Frying and Cooking.

Sole Manufacturers: ——— HUGON & CO., Ltd., ——— MANCHESTER.

YOUR EYES NEED OCULYSOL

When You cannot bear to Look at the Light

—your eyes become inflamed, the lids pucker and droop, and you only carry on with difficulty—that is a sure sign that your eyes are in need of—

OCULYSOL

(Pronounced oc - u - ly - sol)

THE TONIC FOR TIRED EYES.

For Sale at all High Class Chemists and Stores.

Send for FREE Sample Bottle to:

THE OPHTHALMIC & CHEMISTS' SUPPLY CO., Ltd.,
77, Wigmore Street, London, W.1.

FREE SAMPLE

Please send me a free sample bottle of "Oculysol." I enclose 4d. in stamps for postage and packing.
"S.M." Nov. 1921.

Name .....
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My regular Chemist is:

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Adjustable Chairs

THE Ideal Chairs for the fireside, strongly made in stout, hard wood. Antique finish, seat and back wool-stuffed and covered Suede Velour in various shades (Patterns Free). Adjustable to 3 positions. Wide arm rest. Money returned if not approved.

Model F.C. 56.
Price
37/6
Carriage Paid.

List Free · **HANDLEYS, Ltd.,**
SOUTHSEA, PORTSMOUTH.

Do not merely wait for SUCCESS: remember that SUCCESS is awaiting YOU, and this game of cross-purposes may cost you very dear. The following announcement points the way of escape from the rut of unremunerative routine.

Attach to Your Name ✱

PROOF of TRAINED COMPETENCE

so that he who runs may read

The man who can send in a card with world-recognised qualifications following his name—such as F.C.I.S., B.Com., for instance—is seldom kept waiting. Instead, he is more likely to find the doors opened quickly and wide apart, with the coveted **position waiting for him.**

Nor are these sought-after symbols of specialised business training of use only to the man (or woman) who is seeking a new engagement. They are equally invaluable in establishing claims to Promotion under present employers, and in instantly raising the possessor's prestige and status to a pinnacle unattainable by any other means, impressing **everyone** with whom he or she comes in contact.

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Under the perfected system of Specialised Postal Training evolved by the METROPOLITAN COLLEGE, which features the **personal coaching of the individual student** as distinct from the "mass methods" inseparable from oral classes, there is absolutely no need whatever for any interference with a student's regular daily duties. It is entirely practicable for any man or woman of normal ability to win through to full and complete success within the short space of a few months, by means of evening study alone. A student who will systematically devote from six to twelve hours weekly to the acquirement of a Course—the time needed being contingent on the subject(s) selected—is assured in advance of an early and gratifying reward.

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7.—Splendid Prize and Scholarship Scheme.

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(1) The successful students of the College numbered over 350. (This represents the largest number of successes ever gained in these examinations by any institution.)
(2) 57 per cent. of the entire Pass List—Inter. and Final.
(3) Special Language Prize—4 Inter. 2 Final.

Society of Incorporated Accountants and Auditors. May, 1921:

(1) 4th and 10th Places—Inter.
(2) 2nd Place—Prelim.
(3) The successful students of the College numbered 105.

London Association of Accountants. June, 1921:

(1) The successful students of the College numbered 141.
(2) The percentage of successes of Metropolitan College students was 19 per cent. higher than that of all other candidates put together, including 3rd Place—Final Exam.

Incorporated Secretaries' Association. June, 1921:

(1) 1st, 2nd and 3rd Places—Inter. (the whole of the Honours).
(2) 2nd and 3rd Places—Final.
(3) The successful students of the College numbered 82.

Central Association of Accountants. June, 1921.

(1) 1st Place in the Kingdom—Final.
(2) 2nd and 4th Places in the Kingdom—Inter.

"STUDENTS' GUIDE," FREE and POST PAID

—a highly informative and handsome volume of 132 pages.

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE

Dept. S, ST. ALBANS.

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Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA

in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **10/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed.

Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
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Regulation
SAILOR SUITS
From Britain's Naval Port

MADE to measure in Real Navy Serge, as supplied to the Admiralty, or in White Drill, corresponding in every detail to the uniforms worn by H.M. Sailors Self-Measurement Form and Illustrations on request.

We sell the Regulation Serge by the yard, and other qualities suitable for Ladies', Gent.'s, and Children's wear at prices from 2/11 to 25/- a yard, 30 ins. to 56 ins. wide. Tweeds, Cheviots, and Gabardines in all colours for Ladies' wear and Gent.'s suitings.

Write for Pattern Book 37, free.

Any length cut and sent Carriage Paid in U.K.

The Real Navy Serge Warehouse
J.D.MORANT LTD
PORTSMOUTH

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Absolutely FREE GIFT of four World-famous Icilma Preparations—Icilma Cream, the *wonderful* Icilma Shampoos, and the new charming silk-sifted Icilma Bouquet Face Powder.

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Toilet Preparations

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Write IN CAPITALS your name and Address ONLY on the Coupon.

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Please send me your FREE Beauty Box. I enclose 2d. stamp to pay the postage on it.

NAME.....

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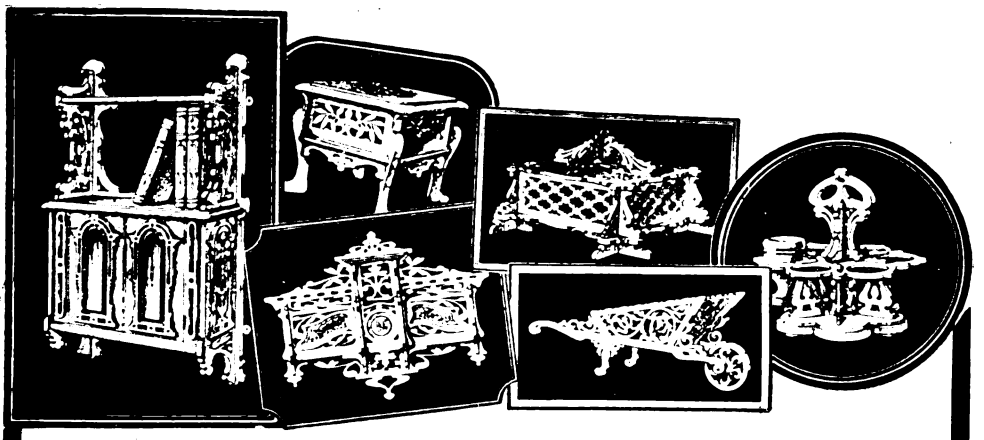
Post TO-DAY in a sealed envelope stamped with 2d. stamp.



Make these in your spare time.

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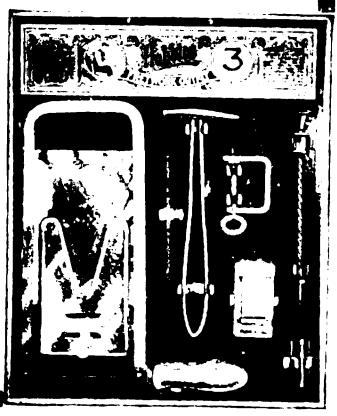

NOW *for* Comfort

THE evenings draw in and the fireside once more makes its strong appeal. Now is the time to enjoy the comfort and luxury of the famous Berkeley Easy Chair. Get your Berkeley NOW—it costs so little in comparison with the years of cosy ease and restful enjoyment it holds in store. Handsome in design and appearance the Berkeley adds dignity and refinement to any home.

The ever-increasing demand for the Berkeley and the fall in the cost of materials has enabled us to make a substantial reduction in the selling price. The quality remains at the same high standard.

The **Berkeley**

FREE DELIVERY in England and Wales (Scotland 5/- extra).

£4:15:0 **15/- with order and balance 16/- monthly**

Full Cash with order £4:10:0

You take no risk in ordering a Berkeley for every chair is

SOLD ON THE MONEY-BACK PRINCIPLE

Upon receipt of first payment with your order we send the Berkeley *Carriage Paid* to your door in England and Wales (Scotland 5/- extra). If upon examination it is not completely satisfactory you may return it within 7 days at *our expense* and we will refund your money in full.

FREE *Write now for samples of Tapestries to choose your own covering, sent Post Free with full specification*

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The Berkeley has the Largest Sale of any Easy Chair in the World.

Berkeleys can only be obtained from us.

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Bag started on frame, instructions, and bright raffia to finish — post free, **3/-**

Price list of materials, etc, things to make in cane and raffia - free from Handicraft Dept, DRYAD WORKS, LEICESTER.

Economical & Congenial.

Warmth in the Home.

Have every room in your house cheerful. Create a warm and healthy atmosphere. **Save on your fuel bill.** Instal

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For Gas or Oil. Guaranteed to generate only **PURE HEAT** without Smoke or Smell. Flueless.

Write for FREE Copy of Booklet—**"Pure Heat."** Say if for gas or oil.

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The only hygienic FLUELESS STOVE.

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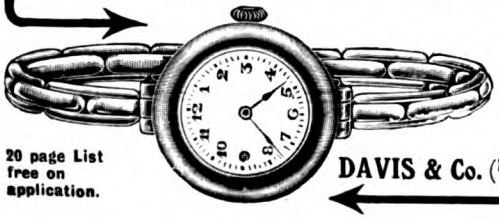
An astounding offer of a SOLID GOLD WATCH BRACELET at an Enormous Reduction.



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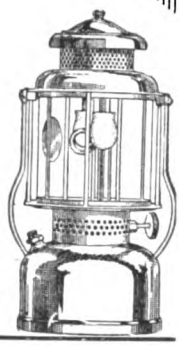

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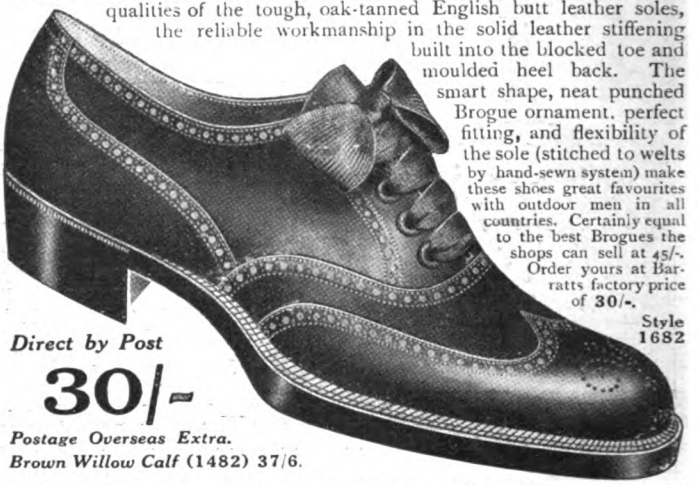

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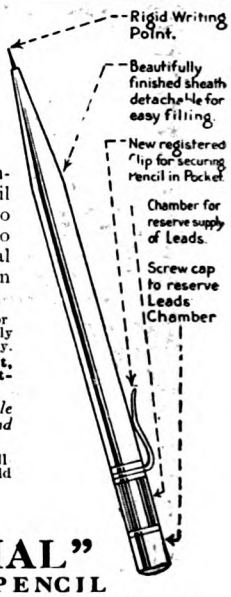

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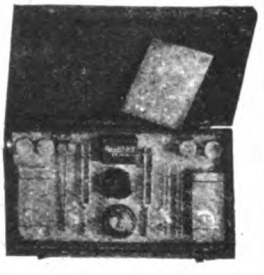

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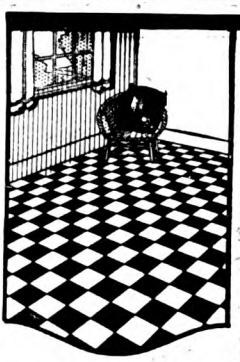

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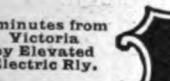

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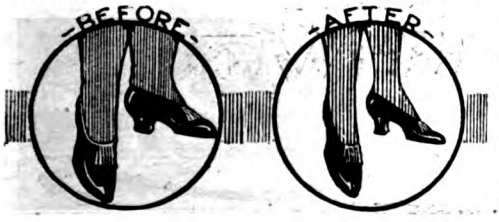

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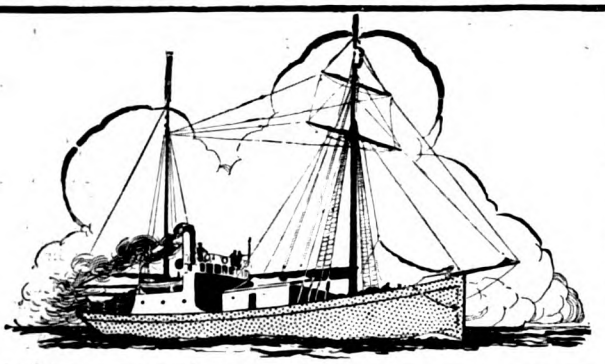

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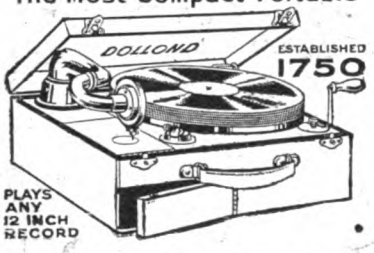

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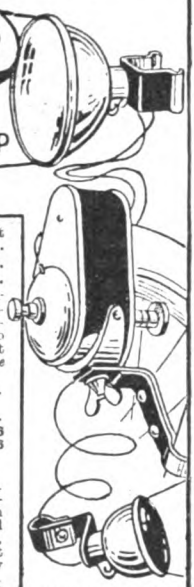
SELF GENERATING ELECTRIC CYCLE LAMP



ALL BRITISH MADE. Prompt Delivery. As used by Royalty.
NO OIL. NO ACID. NO MATCHES.
Always Ready. Output: 8-10 Volts.

The "Voltalite" produces by the movement of the cycle an inexhaustible supply of Electricity to brilliantly illuminate Head Lamp and Rear Lamp at no cost whatever. Lasts years without attention. *Refuse substitutes. To ensure satisfaction insist on the Voltalite.*

V2, complete with head lamp .. **36/-**
V6, complete with head and illuminated rear lamps **40/-**
V7, De Luxe head type **42/6**
V8, De Luxe head & rear type .. **47/6**
Postage extra, 1/-

Mr C. G. W. P., Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, London.
"Your lighting set has been my companion over many tricky roads in England and France, and I shall never use anything else. In fact, considering the cost of carbide at present I am very surprised that any other form of lighting should be used. The 'Voltalite' is obviously the best of the batch."

Stocked by All High-Class Cycle and Electrical Stores. If unobtainable write direct.

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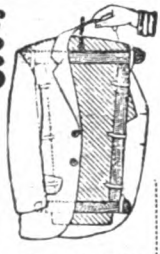
104, HIGH HOLBORN,
W.C.1.

A life-long service for 8/6



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All Best Quality Lancashire-made Treble Woven Twill.

Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned immediately. Carriage paid.

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Your lessons shall be from *ordinary music*, taken, by post, in your own home, at your own time. Until satisfied with the mastery of one lesson you need not apply for the next.

Lessons are graded from those for *Advanced Concert Players* to absolute *Beginners*, who, if adults, *need not know a note to start*. They are printed clearly and helpfully illustrated. They save **at least one-half the usual practice,** make every moment of study a pleasure, and *never fail. I guarantee success* to any average person.

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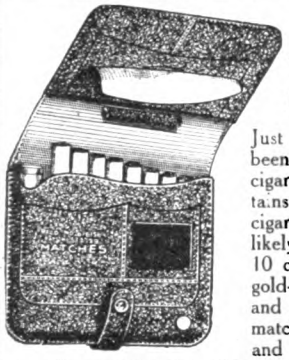

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We pay postage and refund your money if you are not entirely satisfied.

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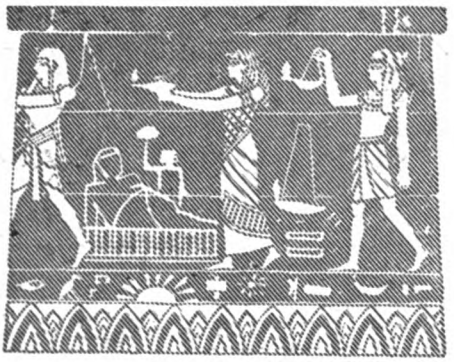

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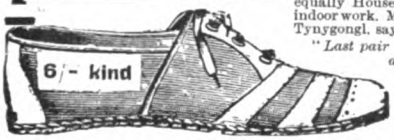

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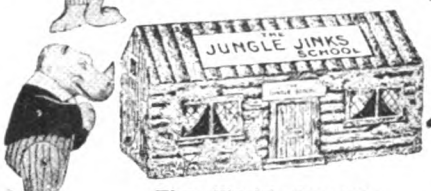

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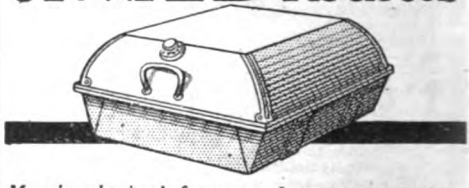

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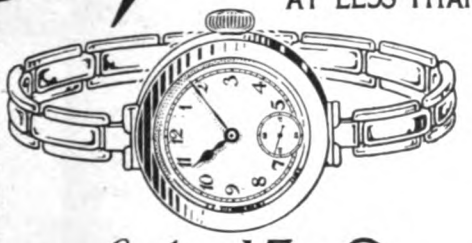

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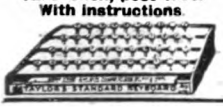

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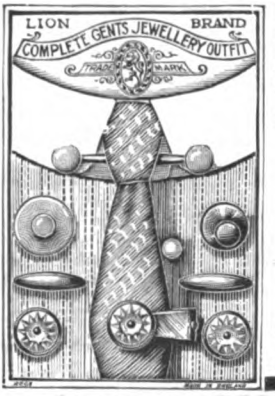

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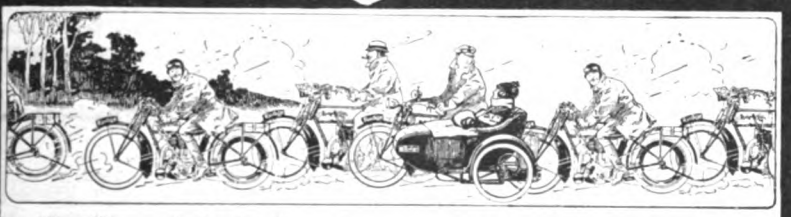

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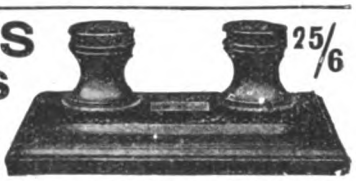

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for November, 1921.

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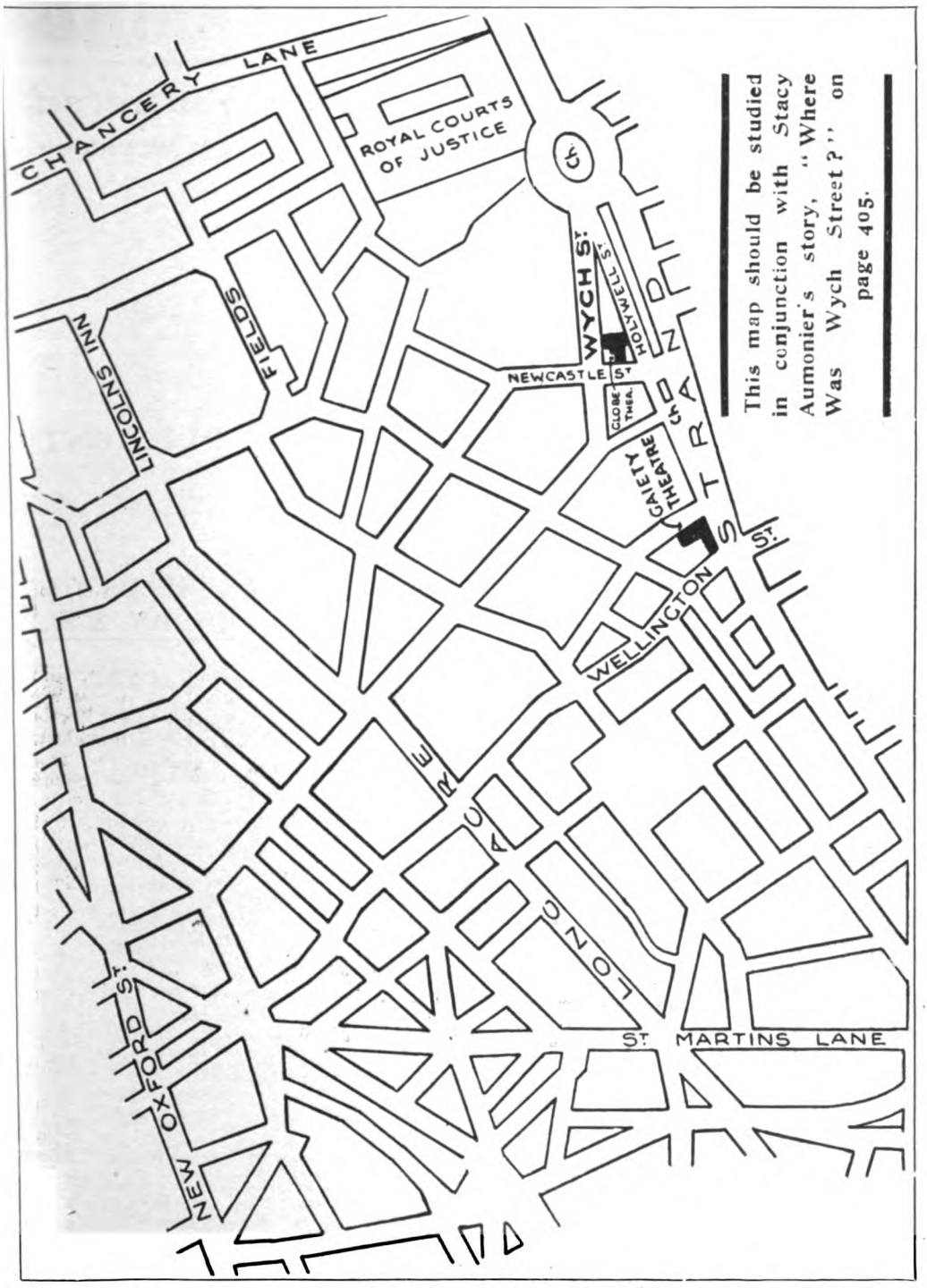
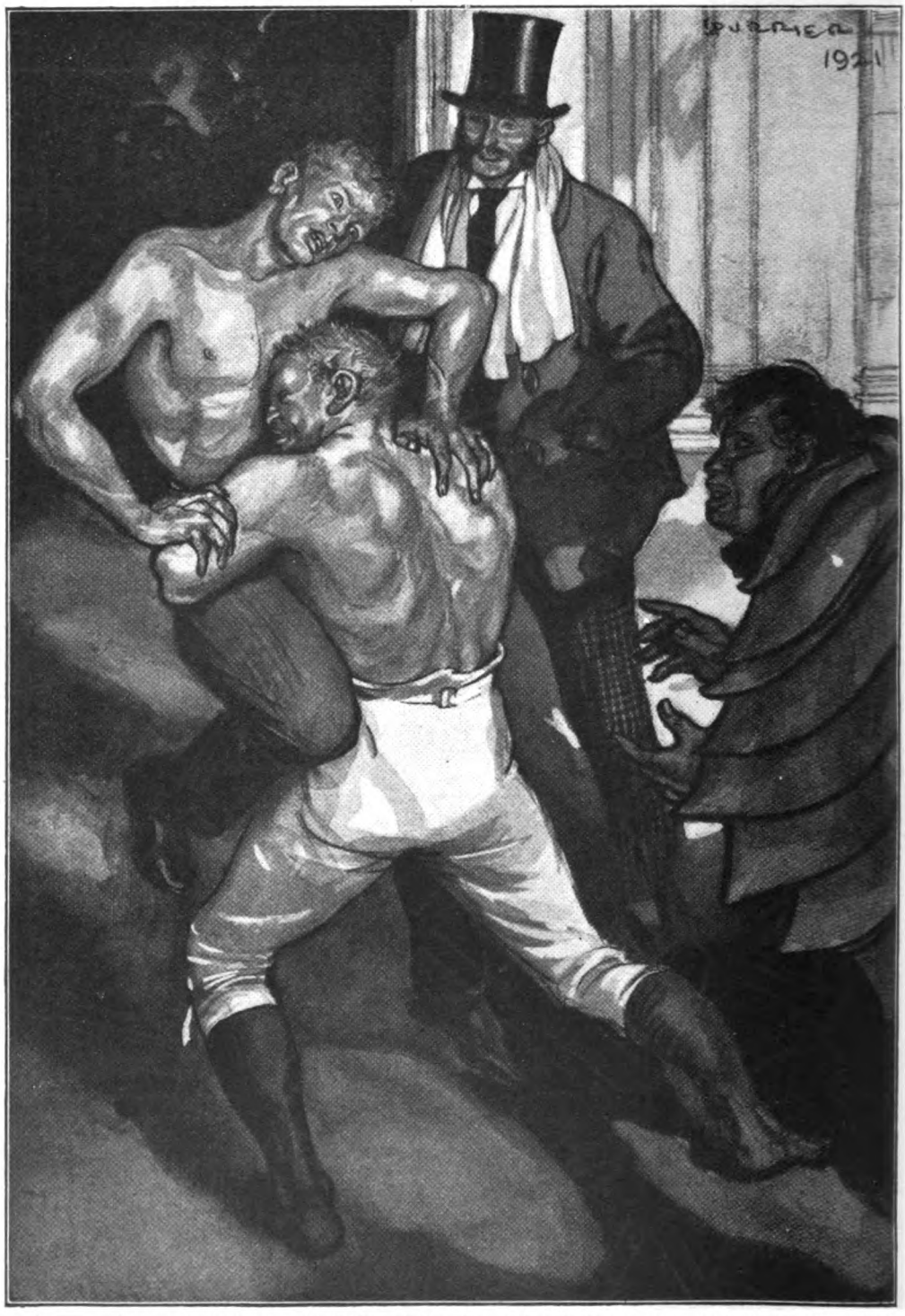


This map should be studied in conjunction with Stacy Aumonier's story, "Where Was Wych Street?" on page 405.



"NEXT INSTANT THE MAN'S BONY ARMS WERE ROUND HIM, AND THE PUGILIST WAS HURLED INTO THE AIR"

(*See page* 385.)

The BULLY OF BROCAS COURT

A LEGEND OF THE RING

BY

A·CONAN DOYLE

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVEN SPURRIER R.O.I.

THAT year—it was in 1878—the South Midland Yeomanry were out near Luton, and the real question which appealed to every man in the great camp was not how to prepare for a possible European war, but the far more vital one how to get a man who could stand up for ten rounds to Farrier-Sergeant Burton. Slogger Burton was a fine upstanding fourteen stone of bone and brawn, with a smack in either hand which would leave any ordinary mortal senseless. A match must be found for him somewhere or his head would outgrow his dragoon helmet. Therefore Sir Fred. Milburn, better known as Mumbles, was dispatched to London to find if among the fancy there was no one who would make a journey in order to take down the number of the bold dragoon.

They were bad days, those, in the prize-ring. The old knuckle-fighting had died out in scandal and disgrace, smothered by the pestilent crowd of betting men and ruffians of all sorts who hung upon the edge of the movement and brought disgrace and ruin upon the decent fighting men, who were often humble heroes whose gallantry has never been surpassed. An honest sportsman who desired to see a fight was usually set upon by villains, against whom he had no redress, since he was himself engaged on what was technically an illegal action. He was stripped in the open street, his purse taken, and his head split open if he ventured to resist. The ring-side could only be reached by men who were prepared to fight their way there with cudgels and hunting-crops. No wonder that the classic sport was attended now by those only who had nothing to lose.

On the other hand, the era of the reserved building and the legal glove-fight had not yet arisen, and the cult was in a strange intermediate condition. It was impossible to regulate it, and equally impossible to abolish it, since nothing appeals more directly and powerfully to the average Briton. Therefore there were scrambling contests in stableyards and barns, hurried visits to France, secret meetings at dawn in wild parts of the country, and all manner of evasions and experiments. The men themselves became as unsatisfactory as their surroundings. There could be no honest open contest, and the loudest bragger talked his way to the top of the list. Only across the Atlantic had the huge figure of John Lawrence Sullivan appeared, who was destined to be the last of the earlier system and the first of the later one.

Things being in this condition, the sporting Yeomanry Captain found it no easy matter

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among the boxing saloons and sporting pubs of London to find a man who could be relied upon to give a good account of the huge Farrier-Sergeant. Heavy-weights were at a premium. Finally his choice fell upon Alf Stevens of Kentish Town, an excellent rising middle-weight who had never yet known defeat and had indeed some claims to the championship. His professional experience and craft would surely make up for the three stone of weight which separated him from the formidable dragoon. It was in this hope that Sir Fred. Milburn engaged him, and proceeded to convey him in his dog-cart behind a pair of spanking greys to the camp of the Yeomen. They were to start one evening, drive up the Great North Road, sleep at St. Albans, and finish their journey next day.

THE prize-fighter met the sporting Baronet at the Golden Cross, where Bates, the little groom, was standing at the head of the spirited horses. Stevens, a pale-faced, clean-cut young fellow, mounted beside his employer and waved his hand to a little knot of fighting men, rough, collarless, reefer-coated fellows who had gathered to bid their comrade good-bye. "Good luck, Alf!" came in a hoarse chorus as the boy released the horses' heads and sprang in behind, while the high dog-cart swung swiftly round the curve into Trafalgar Square.

Sir Frederic was so busy steering among the traffic in Oxford Street and the Edgware Road that he had little thought for anything else, but when he got into the edges of the country near Hendon, and the hedges had at last taken the place of that endless panorama of brick dwellings; he let his horses go easy with a loose rein while he turned his attention to the young man at his side. He had found him by correspondence and recommendation, so that he had some curiosity now in looking him over. Twilight was already falling and the light dim, but what the Baronet saw pleased him well. The man was a fighter every inch, clean-cut, deep-chested, with the long straight cheek and deep-set eye which goes with an obstinate courage. Above all, he was a man who had never yet met his master and was still upheld by the deep sustaining confidence which is never quite the same after a single defeat. The Baronet chuckled as he realized what a surprise packet was being carried north for the Farrier-Sergeant.

"I suppose you are in some sort of training, Stevens?" he remarked, turning to his companion.

"Yes, sir; I am fit to fight for my life."

"So I should judge by the look of you."

"I live regular all the time, sir, but I was matched against Mike Connor for this last week-end and scaled down to eleven four. Then he paid forfeit, and here I am at the top of my form."

"That's lucky. You'll need it all against a man who has a pull of three stone and four inches."

The young man smiled.

"I have given greater odds than that, sir."

"I dare say. But he's a game man as well."

"Well, sir, one can but do one's best."

The Baronet liked the modest but assured tone of the young pugilist. Suddenly an amusing thought struck him, and he burst out laughing.

"By Jove!" he cried. "What a lark if the Bully is out to-night!"

Alf Stevens pricked up his ears.

"Who might he be, sir?"

"Well, that's what the folk are asking. Some say they've seen him, and some say he's a fairy tale, but there's good evidence that he is a real man with a pair of rare good fists that leave their marks behind him."

"And where might he live?"

"On this very road. It's between Finchley and Elstree, as I've heard. There are two chaps, and they come out on nights when the moon is at full and challenge the passers-by to fight in the old style. One fights and the other picks up. By George! the fellow *can* fight, too, by all accounts. Chaps have been found in the morning with their faces all cut to ribbons to show that the Bully had been at work upon them."

Alf Stevens was full of interest.

"I've always wanted to try an old-style battle, sir, but it never chanced to come my way. I believe it would suit me better than the gloves."

"Then you won't refuse the Bully?"

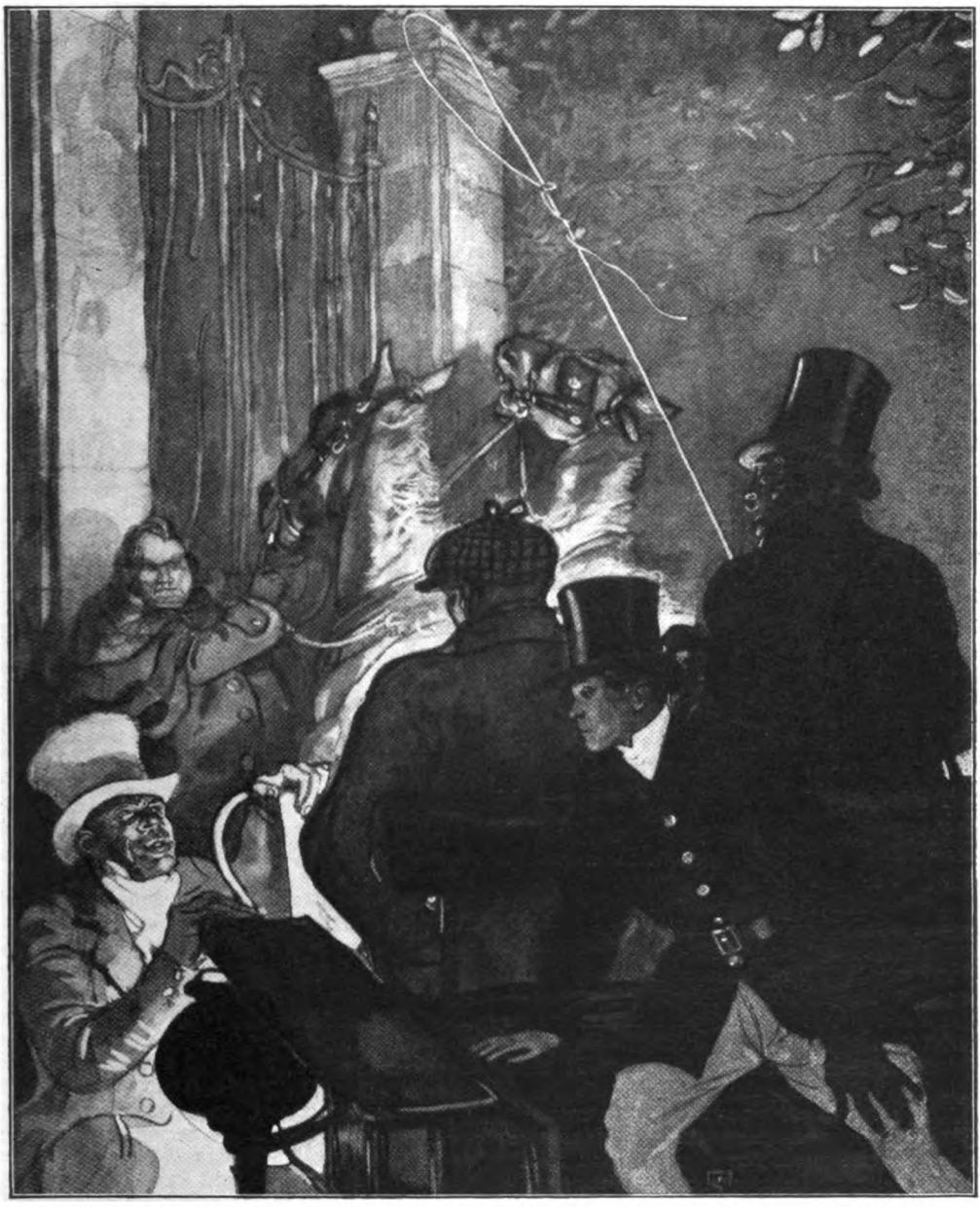
"Refuse him! I'd go ten mile to meet him."

"By George! it would be great!" cried the Baronet. "Well, the moon is at the full, and the place should be about here."

"If he's as good as you say," Stevens remarked, "he should be known in the ring, unless he is just an amateur who amuses himself like that."

"Some think he's an ostler, or maybe a racing-man from the training stables over yonder. Where there are horses there is boxing. If you can believe the accounts, there is something a bit queer and outlandish about the fellow. Hi! Look out, damn you, look out!"

The Baronet's voice had risen to a sudden screech of surprise and of anger. At this point the road dips down into a hollow, heavily shaded by trees, so that at night it arches across like the mouth of a tunnel.



"As the man gripped the leathers his more active comrade rested a bony hand upon the splashboard while he looked up with a pair of fierce eyes at the two travellers."

At the foot of the slope there stand two great stone pillars, which, as viewed by daylight, are lichen-stained and weathered, with heraldic devices on each which are so mutilated by time that they are mere protuberances of stone. An iron gate of elegant design, hanging loosely upon rusted hinges, proclaims both the past glories and the present decay of Brocas Old Hall, which lies at the end of the weed-encumbered avenue. It was from the shadow of this ancient gateway that an active figure had sprung suddenly into the centre of the road and had, with great dexterity, held up the horses, who ramped and pawed as they were forced back upon their haunches.

"Here, Rowe, you 'old the tits, will ye?" cried a high strident voice. "I've a little word to say to this 'ere slap-up Corinthian before 'e goes any farther."

A second man had emerged from the shadows and without a word took hold of the horses' heads. He was a short, thick fellow, dressed in a curious brown many-caped overcoat which came to his knees, with gaiters and boots beneath it. He wore no hat, and those in the dog-cart had a view, as he came in front of the side-lamps, of a surly red face with an ill-fitting lower lip clean shaven, and a high black cravat swathed tightly under the chin. As he gripped the leathers his more active comrade sprang forward and rested a bony hand upon the side of the splashboard while he looked keenly up with a pair of fierce blue eyes at the faces of the two travellers, the light beating full upon his own features. He wore a hat low upon his brow, but in spite of its shadow both the Baronet and the pugilist could see enough to shrink from him, for it was an evil face, evil but very formidable, stern, craggy, high-nosed, and fierce, with an inexorable mouth which bespoke a nature which would neither ask for mercy nor grant it. As to his age, one could only say for certain that a man with such a face was young enough to have all his virility and old enough to have experienced all the wickedness of life. The cold, savage eyes took a deliberate survey, first of the Baronet and then of the young man beside him.

"Aye, Rowe, it's a slap-up Corinthian, same as I said," he remarked over his shoulder to his companion. "But this other is a likely chap. If 'e isn't a millin' cove 'e ought to be. Any'ow, we'll try 'im out."

"Look here," said the Baronet, "I don't know who you are, except that you are a damned impertinent fellow. I'd put the lash of my whip across your face for two pins!"

"Stow that gammon, gov'nor! It ain't safe to speak to me like that."

"I've heard of you and your ways!" cried the angry soldier. "I'll teach you to stop my horses on the Queen's high road! You've got the wrong men this time, my fine fellow, as you will soon learn."

"That's as it may be," said the stranger. "May'ap, master, we may all learn something before we part. One or other of you 'as got to get down and put up your 'ands before you get any farther."

Stevens had instantly sprung down into the road.

"If you want a fight you've come to the right shop," said he; "it's my trade, so don't say I took you unawares."

The stranger gave a cry of satisfaction.

"Blow my dickey!" he shouted. "It *is* a millin' cove, Joe, same as I said. No more chaw-bacons for us, but the real thing. Well, young man, you've met your master to-night. Happen you never 'eard what Lord Longmore said o' me? 'A man must be made special to beat you,' says 'e. That's wot Lord Longmore said."

"That was before the Bull came along," growled the man in front, speaking for the first time.

"Stow your chaffing, Joe! A little more about the Bull and you and me will quarrel. 'E bested me once, but it's all betters and no takers that I glut 'im if ever we meet again. Well, young man, what d'ye think of me?"

"I think you've got your share of cheek."

"Cheek? Wot's that?"

"Impudence, bluff—gas, if you like."

The last word had a surprising effect upon the stranger. He smote his leg with his hand and broke out into a high neighing laugh, in which he was joined by his gruff companion.

"You've said the right word, my beauty," cried the latter, "'Gas' is the word and no error. Well, there's a good moon, but the clouds are comin' up. We had best use the light while we can."

WHILST this conversation had been going on the Baronet had been looking with an ever-growing amazement at the attire of the stranger. A good deal of it confirmed his belief that he was connected with some stables, though making every allowance for this his appearance was very eccentric and old-fasbioned. Upon his head he wore a yellowish-white top-hat of long-haired beaver, such as is still affected by some drivers of four-in-hands, with a bell crown and a curling brim. His dress consisted of a short-waisted swallow-tail coat, snuff-coloured, with steel buttons. It opened in front to show a vest of striped silk, while his legs were encased in buff knee-breeches with blue stockings and low shoes. The figure was angular and hard, with a great suggestion of wiry activity. This Bully of Brocas was clearly a very great character, and the young dragoon officer chuckled as he thought what a glorious story he would carry back to the mess of this queer old-world figure and the thrashing which he was about to receive from the famous London boxer.

Billy, the little groom, had taken charge of the horses, who were shivering and sweating.

"This way!" said the stout man, turning towards the gate. It was a sinister place, black and weird, with the crumbling pillars and the heavy arching trees. Neither the Baronet nor the pugilist liked the look of it.

"Where are you going, then?"

"This is no place for a fight," said the stout man. "We've got as pretty a place as ever you saw inside the gate here. You couldn't beat it on Molesey Hurst."

"The road is good enough for me," said Stevens.

"The road is good enough for two Johnny Raws," said the man with the beaver hat. "It ain't good enough for two slap-up millin' coves like you an' me. You ain't afeard, are you?"

"Not of you or ten like you," said Stevens, stoutly.

"Well, then, come with me and do it as it ought to be done."

Sir Frederic and Stevens exchanged glances.

"I'm game," said the pugilist.

"Come on, then."

THE little party of four passed through the gateway. Behind them in the darkness the horses stamped and reared, while the voice of the boy could be heard as he vainly tried to soothe them. After walking fifty yards up the grass-grown drive the guide turned to the right through a thick belt of trees, and they came out upon a circular plot of grass, white and clear in the moonlight. It had a raised bank, and on the farther side was one of those little pillared stone summer-houses beloved by the early Georgians.

"What did I tell you?" cried the stout man, triumphantly. "Could you do better than this within twenty mile of town? It was made for it. Now, Tom, get to work upon him, and show us what you can do."

It had all become like an extraordinary dream. The strange men, their odd dress, their queer speech, the moonlit circle of grass, and the pillared summer-house all wove themselves into one fantastic whole. It was only the sight of Alf Stevens's ill-fitting tweed suit, and his homely English face surmounting it, which brought the Baronet back to the workaday world. The thin stranger had taken off his beaver hat, his swallow-tailed coat, his silk waistcoat, and finally his shirt had been drawn over his head by his second. Stevens in a cool and leisurely fashion kept pace with the preparations of his antagonist. Then the two fighting men turned upon each other.

But as they did so Stevens gave an exclamation of surprise and horror. The removal of the beaver hat had disclosed a horrible mutilation of the head of his antagonist. The whole upper forehead had fallen in and there seemed to be a broad red weal between his close-cropped hair and his heavy brows.

"Good Lord!" cried the young pugilist. "What's amiss with the man?"

The question seemed to rouse a cold fury in his antagonist.

"You look out for your own 'ead, master," said he. "You'll find enough to do, I'm thinkin', without talkin' about mine."

This retort drew a shout of hoarse laughter from his second. "Well said, my Tommy!" he cried. "It's Lombard Street to a China orange on the one and only."

The man whom he called Tom was standing with his hands up in the centre of the natural ring. He looked a big man in his clothes, but he seemed bigger in the buff, and his barrel chest, sloping shoulders, and loosely-slung muscular arms were all ideal for the game. His grim eyes gleamed fiercely beneath his misshapen brows, and his lips were set in a fixed hard smile, more menacing than a scowl. The pugilist confessed, as he approached him, that he had never seen a more formidable figure. But his bold heart rose to the fact that he had never yet found the man who could master him, and that it was hardly credible that he would appear as an old-fashioned stranger on a country road. Therefore, with an answering smile, he took up his position and raised his hands.

BUT what followed was entirely beyond his experience. The stranger feinted quickly with his left, and sent in a swinging hit with his right, so quick and hard that Stevens had barely time to avoid it and to counter with a short jab as his opponent rushed in upon him. Next instant the man's bony arms were round him, and the pugilist was hurled into the air in a whirling cross-buttock, coming down with a heavy thud upon the grass. The stranger stood back and folded his arms while Stevens scrambled to his feet with a red flush of anger upon his cheeks.

"Look here!" he cried. "What sort of game is this?"

"We claim foul!" the Baronet shouted.

"Foul be damned! As clean a throw as ever I saw!" said the stout man. "What rules do you fight under?"

"Queensberry, of course."

"I never heard of it. It's London prize-ring with us."

"Come on, then!" cried Stevens, furiously. "I can wrestle as well as another. You won't get me napping again."

Nor did he. The next time that the stranger rushed in Stevens caught him in as strong a grip, and after swinging and swaying they came down together in a dog-fall. Three times this occurred, and each time the stranger walked across to his friend and seated himself upon the grassy bank before he recommenced.

"What d'ye make of him?" the Baronet asked, in one of these pauses.

Stevens was bleeding from the ear, but otherwise showed no sign of damage.

"He knows a lot," said the pugilist. "I don't know where he learned it, but he's had a deal of practice somewhere. He's as strong as a lion and as hard as a board, for all his queer face."

"Keep him at out-fighting. I think you are his master there."

"I'm not so sure that I'm his master anywhere, but I'll try my best."

It was a desperate fight, and as round followed round it became clear, even to the amazed Baronet, that the middle-weight champion had met his match. The stranger had a clever draw and a rush which, with his springing hits, made him a most dangerous foe. His head and body seemed insensible to blows, and the horribly malignant smile never for one instant flickered from his lips. He hit very hard with fists like flints, and his blows whizzed up from every angle. He had one particularly deadly lead, an uppercut at the jaw, which again and again nearly came home, until at last it did actually fly past the guard and brought Stevens to the ground. The stout man gave a whoop of triumph.

"The whisker hit, by George! It's a horse to a hen on my Tommy! Another like that, lad, and you have him beat."

"I say, Stevens, this is going too far," said the Baronet, as he supported his weary man. "What will the regiment say if I bring you up all knocked to pieces in a bye-battle! Shake hands with this fellow and give him best, or you'll not be fit for your job."

"Give him best? Not I!" cried Stevens, angrily. "I'll knock that damned smile off his ugly mug before I've done."

"What about the Sergeant?"

"I'd rather go back to London and never see the Sergeant than have my number taken down by this chap."

"Well, 'ad enough?" his opponent asked, in a sneering voice, as he moved from his seat on the bank.

For answer young Stevens sprang forward and rushed at his man with all the strength that was left to him. By the fury of his onset he drove him back, and for a long minute had all the better of the exchanges. But this iron fighter seemed never to tire. His step was as quick and his blow as hard as ever when this long rally had ended. Stevens had eased up from pure exhaustion. But his opponent did not ease up. He came back on him with a shower of furious blows which beat down the weary guard of the pugilist. Alf Stevens was at the end of his strength and would in another instant have sunk to the ground but for a singular intervention.

IT has been said that in their approach to the ring the party had passed through a grove of trees. Out of these there came a peculiar shrill cry, a cry of agony, which might be from a child or from some small woodland creature in distress. It was inarticulate, high-pitched, and inexpressibly melancholy. At the sound the stranger, who had knocked Stevens on to his knees, staggered back and looked round him with an expression of helpless horror upon his face. The smile had left his lips and there only remained the loose-lipped weakness of a man in the last extremity of terror.

"It's after me again, mate!" he cried.

'Stick it out, Tom! You have him nearly beat! It can't hurt you."

'It can 'urt me! It will 'urt me!" screamed the fighting man. "My God! I can't face it! Ah, I see it! I see it!"

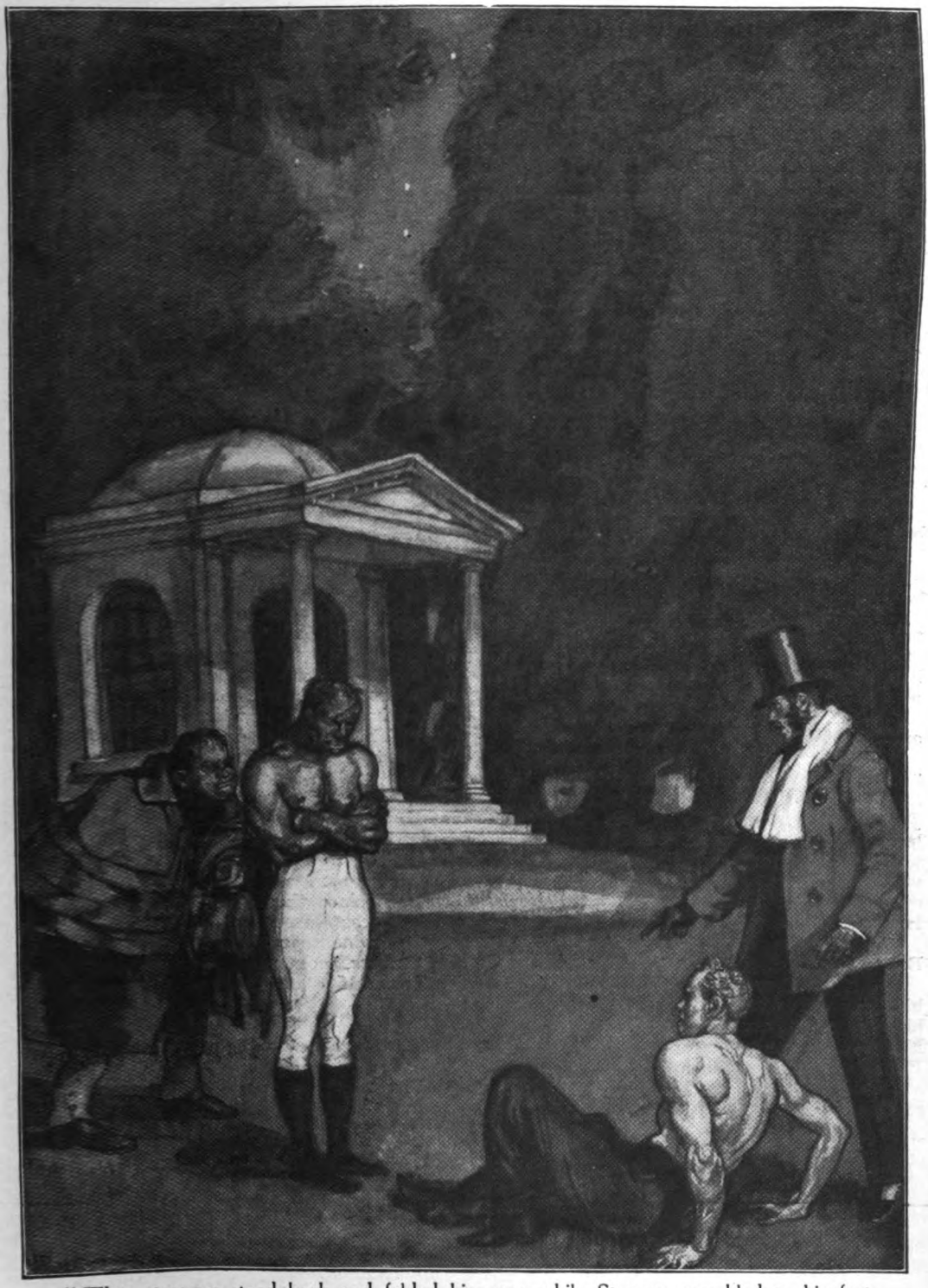
With a scream of fear he turned and bounded off into the brushwood. His companion, swearing loudly, picked up the pile of clothes and darted after him, the dark shadows swallowing up their flying figures.

Stevens, half-senseless, had staggered back and lay upon the grassy bank, his head pillowed upon the chest of the young Baronet, who was holding his flask of brandy to his lips. As they sat there they were both aware that the cries had become louder and shriller. Then from among the bushes there ran a small white terrier, nosing about as if following a trail and yelping most piteously. It squattered across the grassy sward, taking no notice of the two young men. Then it also vanished into the shadows. As it did so the two spectators sprang to their feet and ran as hard as they could tear for the gateway and the trap. Terror had seized them—a panic terror far above reason or control. Shivering and shaking, they threw themselves into the dog-cart, and it was not until the willing horses had put two good miles between that ill-omened hollow and themselves that they at last ventured to speak.

"Did you ever see such a dog?" asked the Baronet.

"No," cried Stevens. "And, please God, I never may again."

LATE that night the two travellers broke their journey at the Swan Inn, near Harpenden Common. The landlord was an old acquaintance of the Baronet's and gladly joined him in a glass of port after supper. A famous old sport was Mr. Joe Horner, of the Swan, and he would talk by the hour of the legends of the ring, whether new or old. The name of Alf Stevens was well known to him,



"The stranger stood back and folded his arms while Stevens scrambled to his feet with a red flush of anger upon his cheeks."

and he looked at him with the deepest interest.

"Why, sir, you have surely been fighting," said he. "I hadn't read of any engagement in the papers."

"Enough said of that," Stevens answered, in a surly voice.

"Well, no offence! I suppose"—his smiling face became suddenly very serious—"I suppose you didn't, by chance, see anything of him they call the Bully of Brocas as you came north?"

"Well, what if we did?"

The landlord was tense with excitement.

"It was him that nearly killed Bob Meadows. It was at the very gate of Brocas Old Hall that he stopped him. Another man was with him. Bob was game to the marrow, but he was found hit to pieces on the lawn inside the gate where the summer-house stands.

The Baronet nodded.

"Ah, you've been there!" cried the landlord.

"Well, we may as well make a clean breast of it," said the Baronet, looking at Stevens. "We've been there, and we met the man you speak of—an ugly customer he is, too!"

"Tell me!" said the landlord, in a voice that sank to a whisper. "Is it true what Bob Meadows says, that the men are dressed like our grandfathers, and that the fighting man has his head all caved in?"

"Well, he was old-fashioned, certainly, and his head was the queerest ever I saw."

"God in Heaven!" cried the landlord. "Do you know, sir, that Tom Hickman, the famous prize-fighter, together with his pal, Joe Rowe, a silversmith of the City, met his death at that very point in the year 1822 when he was drunk, and tried to drive on the wrong side of a wagon. Both were killed and the wheel of the wagon crushed in Hickman's forehead."

"Hickman! Hickman!" said the Baronet. "Not the gas-man?"

"Yes, sir, they called him Gas. He won his fights with what they called the 'whisker hit,' and no one could stand against him until Neate—him that they called the Bristol Bull—brought him down."

Stevens had risen from the table as white as cheese.

"Let's get out of this, sir. I want fresh air. Let us get on our way."

The landlord clapped him on the back.

"Cheer up, lad! You've held him off, anyhow, and that's more than anyone else has ever done. Sit down and have another glass of wine, for if a man in England has earned it this night it is you. There's many a debt you would pay if you gave the Gasman a welting, whether dead or alive. Do you know what he did in this very room?"

THE two travellers looked round with startled eyes at the lofty room, stone-flagged and oak-panelled, with great open grate at the farther end.

'Yes, in this very room. I had it from old Squire Scotter, who was here that very night. It was the day when Shelton beat Josh Hudson out St. Albans way, and Gas had won a pocketful of money on the fight. He and his pal Rowe came in here upon their way, and he was mad-raging drunk. The folk fairly shrunk into the corners and under the tables, for he was stalkin' round with the great kitchen poker in his hand, and there was murder behind the smile upon his face. He was like that when the drink was in him—cruel, reckless, and a terror to the world. Well, what think you that he did at last with the poker? There was a little dog, a terrier as I've heard, coiled up before the fire, for it was a bitter December night. The Gasman broke its back with one blow of the poker. Then he burst out laughin', flung a curse or two at the folk that shrunk away from him, and so out to his high gig that was waiting outside. The next we heard was that he was carried down to Finchley with his head ground to a jelly by the wagon wheel. Yes, they do say the little dog with its bleeding skin and its broken back has been seen since then, crawlin' and yelpin' about Brocas Corner, as if it was lookin' for the swine that killed it. So you see, Mr. Stevens, you were fightin' for more than yourself when you put it across the Gasman."

"Maybe so," said the young prize-fighter, "but I want no more fights like that. The Farrier-Sergeant is good enough for me, sir, and if it is the same to you, we'll take a railway train back to town."

THE HEEL OF ACHILLES

BY

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY ALFRED LEETE

ON the young man's face, as he sat sipping his ginger-ale in the club-house smoking-room, there was a look of disillusionment.

"Never again!" he said.

The Oldest Member glanced up from his paper.

"You are proposing to give up golf once more?" he queried.

"Not golf. Betting on golf." The Young Man frowned. "I've just been let down badly. Wouldn't you have thought I had a good thing, laying seven to two on McTavish against Robinson?"

"Undoubtedly," said the Sage. "The odds, indeed, generous as they are, scarcely indicate the former's superiority. Do you mean to tell me that the thing came unstitched?"

"Robinson won in a walk, after being three down at the turn."

"Strange! What happened?"

"Why, they looked in at the bar to have a refresher before starting for the tenth," said the young man, his voice quivering, "and McTavish suddenly discovered that there was a hole in his trouser-pocket and sixpence had dropped out. He worried so frightfully about it that on the second nine he couldn't do a thing right. Went completely off his game and didn't win a hole."

The Sage shook his head gravely.

"If this is really going to be a lesson to you, my boy, never to bet on the result of a golf-match, it will be a blessing in disguise. There is no such thing as a certainty in golf. I wonder if I ever told you a rather curious episode in the career of Vincent Jopp?"

"*The* Vincent Jopp? The American multi-millionaire?"

"The same. You never knew he once came within an ace of winning the Amateur Championship, did you?"

"I never heard of his playing golf."

"He played for one season. After that he gave it up and has not touched a club since. Ring the bell and get me a small lime-juice, and I will tell you all."

IT was long before your time (said the Oldest Member) that the events which I am about to relate took place. I had just completed my college education, and was feeling particularly pleased with myself because I had secured the job of private and confidential secretary to Vincent Jopp, then a man in the early thirties, busy in laying the foundations of his present remarkable fortune.

Jopp was, I think, the most extraordinary personality I have encountered in a long and many-sided life. He was admirably equipped for success in finance, having the steely eye and square jaw without which it is hopeless for a man to enter that line of business. He possessed also an overwhelming confidence in himself, and the ability to switch a cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other without wiggling his ears, which, as you know, is the stamp of the genuine Monarch of the Money Market. He was the nearest approach to the financier on the films, the fellow who makes his jaw-muscles jump when he is telephoning, that I have ever seen.

Like all successful men, he was a man of method. He kept a pad on his desk on which he would scribble down his appointments, and it was my duty on entering the office each morning to take this pad and type its contents neatly in a loose-leaved ledger. Usually, of course, these entries referred to business appointments and deals

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which he was contemplating, but one day I was interested to note, against the date May 3rd, the entry :—

" *Propose to Amelia.*"

I was interested, as I say, but not surprised. Though a man of steel and iron, there was nothing of the celibate about Vincent Jopp. He was one of those men who marry early and often. On three separate occasions before I joined his service he had jumped off the dock, to scramble back to shore again later by means of the Divorce Court lifebelt. Scattered here and there about the country there were three ex-Mrs. Jopps, drawing their monthly envelope, and now, it seemed, he contemplated the addition of a fourth to the platoon.

I was not surprised, I say, at this resolve of his. What did seem a little remarkable to me was the thorough way in which he had thought the thing out. This iron-willed man recked nothing of possible obstacles. Under the date of June 1st was the entry :—

" *Marry Amelia*" ;

while in the March of the following year he had arranged to have his first-born christened Thomas Reginald. Later on, the short-coating of Thomas Reginald was arranged for, and there was a note about sending him to school. Many hard things have been said of Vincent Jopp, but nobody has ever accused him of not being a man who looked ahead.

On the morning of May 4th Jopp came into the office, looking, I fancied, a little thoughtful. He sat for some moments staring before him with his brow a trifle furrowed ; then he seemed to come to himself. He rapped his desk.

" Hi ! You ! " he said. It was thus that he habitually addressed me.

" Mr. Jopp ? " I replied.

" What's golf ? "

I had at that time just succeeded in getting my handicap down into single figures, and I welcomed the opportunity of dilating on the noblest of pastimes. But I had barely begun my eulogy when he stopped me.

" It's a game, is it ? "

" I suppose you could call it that," I said, " but it is an off-hand way of describing the holiest——"

" How do you play it ? "

" Pretty well," I said. " At the beginning of the season I didn't seem able to keep 'em straight at all, but lately I've been doing fine. Getting better every day. Whether it was that I was moving my head or gripping too tightly with the right hand——"

" Keep the reminiscences for your grandchildren during the long winter evenings," he interrupted, abruptly, as was his habit. " What I want to know is what a fellow does when he plays golf. Tell me in as few words as you can just what it's all about."

" You hit a ball with a stick till it falls into a hole."

" Easy ! " he snapped. " Take dictation."

I produced my pad.

" May the fifth, take up golf. What's an Amateur Championship ? "

" It is the annual competition to decide which is the best player among the amateurs. There is also a Professional Championship, and an Open event."

" Oh, there are golf professionals, are there ? What do they do ? "

" They teach golf."

" Which is the best of them ? "

" Sandy McHoots won both British and American Open events last year."

" Wire him to come here at once."

" But McHoots is in Inverlochty, in Scotland."

" Never mind. Get him ; tell him to name his own terms. When is the Amateur Championship ? "

" I think it is on September the twelfth this year."

" All right, take dictation. September twelfth, win Amateur Championship."

I stared at him in amazement, but he was not looking at me.

" Got that ? " he said. " September thir—— Oh, I was forgetting ! Add September twelfth, Corner wheat. September thirteenth, Marry Amelia."

" Marry Amelia," I echoed, moistening my pencil.

" Where do you play this—what's-its-name —golf ? "

" There are clubs all over the country. I belong to the Wissahicky Glen."

" That a good place ? "

" Very good."

" Arrange to-day for my becoming a member."

SANDY McHOOTS arrived in due course, and was shown into the private office.

" Mr. McHoots ? " said Vincent Jopp.

" Mphm ! " said the Open Champion.

" I have sent for you, Mr. McHoots, because I hear that you are the greatest living exponent of this game of golf."

" Aye," said the champion, cordially, " I am that."

" I wish you to teach me the game. I am already somewhat behind schedule owing to the delay incident upon your long journey, so let us start at once. Name a few of the most important points in connection with the game. My secretary will make notes of them, and I will memorize them. In this way we shall save time. Now, what is the

most important thing to remember when playing golf ? "

" Keep your heid still."

" A simple task."

" Na sae simple as it soonds."

" Nonsense ! " said Vincent Jopp, curtly. " If I decide to keep my head still, I shall keep it still. What next ? "

" Keep yer ee on the ba'."

" It shall be attended to. And the next ? "

" Dinna press."

" I won't. And to resume."

Mr. McHoots ran through a dozen of the basic rules, and I took them down in shorthand. Vincent Jopp studied the list.

" Very good. Easier than I had supposed. On the first tee at Wissahicky Glen at eleven sharp to-morrow, Mr. McHoots. Hi ! You ! "

" Sir ? " I said.

" Go out and buy me a set of clubs, a red jacket, a cloth cap, a pair of spiked shoes, and a ball."

' One ball ? "

" Certainly. What need is there of more ? "

" It sometimes happens," I explained, " that a player who is learning the game fails to hit his ball straight, and then he often loses it in the rough at the side of the fairway."

" Absurd ! " said Vincent Jopp. " If I set out to drive my ball straight, I shall drive it straight. Good morning, Mr. McHoots. You will excuse me now. I am busy cornering Woven Textiles."

" ' I have sent for you, Mr. McHoots, because I hear that you are the greatest living exponent of this game of golf.' ' Aye,' said the champion, cordially, ' I am that.' "

GOLF is in its essence a simple game. You laugh in a sharp, bitter, barking manner when I say this, but nevertheless it is true. Where the average man goes wrong is in making the game difficult for himself Observe the non-player, the man who walks round with you for the sake of the fresh air. He will hole out with a single care-free flick of his umbrella the twenty-foot putt over which you would ponder and hesitate for a full minute before sending it right off the line. Put a driver in his hands, and he pastes the ball into the next county without a thought. It is only when he takes to the game in earnest that he becomes self-conscious and anxious, and tops his shots even as you and I. A man who could retain through his golfing career the almost scornful confidence of the non-player would be unbeatable. Fortunately such an attitude of mind is beyond the scope of human nature.

It was not, however, beyond the scope of Vincent Jopp, the superman. Vincent Jopp was, I am inclined to think, the only golfer who ever approached the game in a spirit of Pure Reason. I have read of men who, never having swum in their lives, studied a text-book on their way down to the

swimming bath, mastered its contents, and dived in and won the big race. In just such a spirit did Vincent Jopp start to play golf. He committed McHoots's hints to memory, and then went out on the links and put them into practice. He came to the tee with a clear picture in his mind of what he had to do, and he did it. He was not intimidated, like the average novice, by the thought that if he pulled in his hands he would slice, or if he gripped too tightly with the right he would pull. Pulling in the hands was an error, so he did not pull in his hands. Gripping too tightly was a defect, so he did not grip too tightly. With that weird concentration which had served him so well in business he did precisely what he had set out to do—no less and no more. Golf with Vincent Jopp was an exact science.

The annals of the game are studded with the names of those who have made rapid progress in their first season. Colonel Quill, we read in our Vardon, took up golf at the age of fifty-six, and by devising an ingenious machine consisting of a fishing-line and a sawn-down bedpost was enabled to keep his head so still that he became a scratch player before the end of the year. But no one, I imagine, except Vincent Jopp has ever achieved scratch on his first morning on the links.

The main difference, we are told, between the amateur and the professional golfer is the fact that the latter is always aiming at the pin, while the former has in his mind a vague picture of getting somewhere reasonably near it. Vincent Jopp invariably went for the pin. He tried to hole out from anywhere inside two hundred and twenty yards. The only occasion on which I ever heard him express any chagrin or disappointment was during the afternoon round on his first day out, when from the tee on the two-hundred-and-forty-yard seventh he laid his ball within six inches of the hole.

"A marvellous shot!" I cried, genuinely stirred.

"Too much to the right," said Vincent Jopp, frowning.

He went on from triumph to triumph. He won the monthly medal in May, June, July, August, and September. Towards the end of May he was heard to complain that Wissahicky Glen was not a sporting course. The Greens Committee sat up night after night trying to adjust his handicap so as to give other members an outside chance against him. The golf experts of the daily papers wrote columns about his play. And it was pretty generally considered throughout the country that it would be a pure formality for anyone else to enter against him in the Amateur Championship—an opinion which was borne out when he got through into the final without losing a hole. A safe man to have betted on, you would have said. But mark the sequel.

THE Amateur Championship was held that year away up in the North. I had accompanied my employer there; for, though engaged on this nerve-wearing contest, he refused to allow his business to be interfered with. As he had indicated in his schedule, he was busy at the time cornering wheat; and it was my task to combine the duties of caddie and secretary. Each day I accompanied him round the links with my notebook and his bag of clubs, and the progress of his various matches was somewhat complicated by the arrival of a stream of telegraph-boys bearing important messages. He would read these between the strokes and dictate replies to me, never, however, taking more than the five minutes allowed by the rules for an interval between strokes. I am inclined to think that it was this that put the finishing touch on his opponents' discomfiture. It is not soothing for a nervous man to have the game hung up on the green while his adversary dictates to his caddie a letter beginning "Yours of the 11th inst. received and contents noted. In reply would state——" This sort of thing puts a man off his game.

I was resting in the lobby of the hotel after a strenuous day's work, when I found that I was being paged. I answered the summons, and was informed that a lady wished to see me. Her card bore the name "Miss Amelia Merridew." Amelia! The name seemed familiar. Then I remembered. Amelia was the name of the girl Vincent Jopp intended to marry, the fourth of the long line of Mrs. Jopps. I hurried to present myself, and found a tall, slim girl, who was plainly labouring under a considerable agitation.

"Miss Merridew?" I said.

"Yes," she murmured. "My name will be strange to you."

"Am I right," I queried, "in supposing that you are the lady to whom Mr. Jopp——"

"I am! I am!" she replied. "And, oh, what shall I do?"

"Kindly give me particulars," I said, taking out my pad from force of habit.

She hesitated a moment, as if afraid to speak.

"You are caddying for Mr. Jopp in the final to-morrow?" she said at last.

"I am."

"Then could you—would you mind—would it be giving you too much trouble if I asked you to shout 'Boo!' at him when he is making his stroke, if he looks like winning?"

I was perplexed.

"'Would it be giving you too much trouble,' she said, 'if I asked you to shout "Boo!" at him when he is making his stroke, if he looks like winning?'"

I don't understand."

"I see that I must tell you all. I am sure you will treat what I say as absolutely confidential."

"Certainly."

"I am provisionally engaged to Mr. Jopp."

"Provisionally?"

She gulped.

"Let me tell you my story. Mr. Jopp asked me to marry him, and I would rather do anything on earth than marry him. But how could I say 'No!' with those awful eyes of his boring me through? I knew that if I said 'No,' he would argue me out of it in two minutes. I had an idea. I gathered that he had never played golf, so I told him that I would marry him if he won the Amateur Championship this year. And now I find that he has been a secret golfer all along, and, what is more, a plus man! It isn't fair."

"He was not a golfer when you made that condition," I said. "He took up the game on the following day."

"Impossible! How could he have become as good as he is in this short time?"

"Because he is Vincent Jopp! In his lexicon there is no such word as impossible."

She shuddered.

"What a man! But I can't marry him," she cried. "I want to marry somebody else. Oh, won't you help me? Do shout 'Boo!' at him when he is starting his down-swing!"

I shook my head.

"It would take more than a single 'boo' to put Vincent Jopp off his stroke."

"But won't you try it?"

"I cannot. My duty is to my employer."

"Oh, do!"

"No, no. Duty is duty, and paramount with me. Besides, I have a bet on him to win."

The stricken girl uttered a faint moan, and tottered away.

I WAS in our suite shortly after dinner that night, going over some of the notes I had made that day, when the telephone rang. Jopp was out at the time, taking a short stroll with his after-dinner cigar. I unhooked the receiver, and a female voice spoke.

"Is that Mr. Jopp?"

"Mr. Jopp's secretary speaking. Mr. Jopp is out."

"Oh, it's nothing important. Will you say that Mrs. Luella Mainprice Jopp called up to wish him luck? I shall be on the course to-morrow to see him win the final."

I returned to my notes. Soon afterwards the telephone rang again.

"Vincent, dear?"

"Mr. Jopp's secretary speaking."

"Oh, will you say that Mrs. Jane Jukes Jopp called up to wish him luck? I shall be there to-morrow to see him play."

I resumed my work. I had hardly started when the telephone rang for the third time.

"Mr. Jopp?"

"Mr. Jopp's secretary speaking."

"This is Mrs. Agnes Parsons Jopp. I just called up to wish him luck. I shall be looking on to-morrow."

I shifted my work nearer to the telephone-table so as to be ready for the next call. I had heard that Vincent Jopp had only been married three times, but you never knew.

Presently Jopp came in.

"Anybody called up?" he asked.

"Nobody on business. An assortment of your wives were on the wire wishing you luck. They asked me to say that they will be on the course to-morrow."

For a moment it seemed to me that the man's iron repose was shaken.

"Luella?" he asked.

"She was the first."

"Jane?"

"And Jane."

"And Agnes?"

"Agnes," I said, "is right."

"H'm!" said Vincent Jopp. And for the first time since I had known him I thought that he was ill at ease.

THE day of the final dawned bright and clear. At least, I was not awake at the time to see, but I suppose it did; for at nine o'clock, when I came down to breakfast, the sun was shining brightly. The first eighteen holes were to be played before lunch, starting at eleven. Until twenty minutes before the hour Vincent Jopp kept me busy taking dictation, partly on matters connected with his wheat deal and partly on a signed article dealing with the Final, entitled "How I Won." At eleven sharp we were out on the first tee.

Jopp's opponent was a nice-looking young man, but obviously nervous. He giggled in a distraught sort of way as he shook hands with my employer.

"Well, may the best man win," he said.

"I have arranged to do so," replied Jopp, curtly, and started to address his ball.

There was a large crowd at the tee, and, as Jopp started his down-swing, from somewhere on the outskirts of this crowd there came suddenly a musical "Boo!" It rang out in the clear morning air like a bugle.

I had been right in my estimate of Vincent Jopp. His forceful stroke never wavered. Squarely on the meat the head of his club struck the ball, dispatching it a good two hundred yards down the middle of the fairway. As we left the tee I saw Amelia Merridew being led away with bowed head

by two members of the Greens Committee. Poor girl! My heart bled for her. And yet, after all, Fate had been kind in removing her from the scene, even in custody, for she could hardly have borne to watch the proceedings. Vincent Jopp made rings round his antagonist. Hole after hole he won in his remorseless, machine-like way, until when lunch-time came at the end of the eighteenth he was ten up. All the other holes had been halved.

IT was after lunch, as we made our way to the first tee, that the advance-guard of the Mrs. Jopps appeared in the person of Luella Mainprice Jopp, a kittenish little woman with blonde hair and a Pekingese dog. I remembered reading in the papers that she had divorced my employer for persistent and aggravated mental cruelty, calling witnesses to bear out her statement that he had said he did not like her in pink, and that on two separate occasions he had insisted on her dog eating the leg of a chicken instead of the breast; but Time, the great healer, seemed to have removed all bitterness, and she greeted him affectionately.

"Wassums going to win great big championship against nasty rough strong man?" she said.

"Such," said Vincent Jopp, "is my intention. It was kind of you, Luella, to trouble to come and watch me. I wonder if you know Mrs. Agnes Parsons Jopp?" he said, courteously, indicating a kind-looking, motherly woman who had just come up. "How are you, Agnes?"

"If you had asked me that question this morning, Vincent," replied Mrs. Agnes Parsons Jopp, "I should have been obliged to say that I felt far from well. I had an odd throbbing feeling in the left elbow, and I am sure my temperature was above the normal. But this afternoon I am a little better. How are you, Vincent?"

Although she had, as I recalled from the reports of the case, been compelled some years earlier to request the Court to sever her marital relations with Vincent Jopp on the ground of calculated and inhuman brutality, in that he had callously refused, in spite of her pleadings, to take Old Dr. Bennett's Tonic Swamp-Juice three times a day, her voice, as she spoke, was kind and even anxious. Badly as this man had treated her—and I remember that several of the jury had been unable to restrain their tears when she was in the witness-box giving her evidence—there still seemed to linger some remnants of the old affection.

"I am quite well, thank you, Agnes," said Vincent Jopp.

"Are you wearing your liver-pad?"

A frown flitted across my employer's strong face.

"I am not wearing my liver-pad," he replied, brusquely.

"Oh, Vincent, how rash of you!"

He was about to speak, when a sudden exclamation from his rear checked him. A genial-looking woman in a sports coat was standing there, eyeing him with a sort of humorous horror.

"Well, Jane," he said.

I gathered that this was Mrs. Jane Jukes Jopp, the wife who had divorced him for systematic and ingrowing fiendishness on the ground that he had repeatedly outraged her feelings by wearing a white waistcoat with a dinner-jacket. She continued to look at him dumbly, and then uttered a sort of strangled, hysterical laugh.

"Those legs!" she cried. "Those legs!"

Vincent Jopp flushed darkly. Even the strongest and most silent of us have our weaknesses, and my employer's was the rooted idea that he looked well in knickerbockers. It was not my place to try to dissuade him, but there was no doubt that they did not suit him. Nature, in bestowing upon him a massive head and a jutting chin, had forgotten to finish him off at the other end. Vincent Jopp's legs were skinny.

"You poor dear man!" went on Mrs. Jane Jukes Jopp. "What practical joker ever lured you into appearing in public in knickerbockers?"

"I don't object to the knickerbockers," said Mrs. Agnes Parsons Jopp, "but when he foolishly comes out in quite a strong east wind without his liver-pad——"

"Little Tinky-Ting don't need no liver-pad, he don't," said Mrs. Luella Mainprice Jopp, addressing the animal in her arms, "because he was his muzzer's pet, he was!"

I was standing quite near to Vincent Jopp, and at this moment I saw a bead of perspiration spring out on his forehead, and into his steely eyes there came a positively hunted look. I could understand and sympathize. Napoleon himself would have wilted if he had found himself in the midst of a trio of females, one talking baby-talk, another fussing about his health, and the third making derogatory observations on his lower limbs. Vincent Jopp was becoming unstrung.

"May as well be starting, shall we?"

It was Jopp's opponent who spoke. There was a strange, set look on his face—the look of a man whose back is against the wall. Ten down on the morning's round, he had drawn on his reserves of courage and was determined to meet the inevitable bravely.

Vincent Jopp nodded absently, then turned to me.

"Keep those women away from me," he

whispered, tensely. "They'll put me off my stroke!"

"Put *you* off your stroke!" I exclaimed, incredulously.

"Yes, me! How the deuce can I concentrate with people babbling about liver-pads and—and knickerbockers—all round me? Keep them away!"

He started to address his ball, and there was a weak uncertainty in the way he did it that prepared me for what was to come. His club rose, wavered, fell; and the ball, badly topped, trickled two feet and sank into a cuppy lie.

"Is that good or bad?" inquired Mrs. Luella Mainprice Jopp.

A sort of desperate hope gleamed in the eye of the other competitor in the final. He swung with renewed vigour. His ball sang through the air and lay within chip-shot distance of the green.

"At the very least," said Mrs. Agnes Parsons Jopp, "I hope, Vincent, that you are wearing flannel next your skin."

I heard Jopp give a stifled groan as he took his spoon from the bag. He made a gallant effort to retrieve the lost ground, but the ball struck a stone and bounded away into the long grass to the side of the green. His opponent won the hole.

We moved to the second tee.

"Now, *that* young man," said Mrs. Jane Jukes Jopp, indicating her late husband's blushing antagonist, "is quite right to wear knickerbockers. He can carry them off. But a glance in the mirror must have shown you that you——"

"I'm sure you're feverish, Vincent," said Mrs. Agnes Parsons Jopp, solicitously. "You are quite flushed. There is a wild gleam in your eyes."

"Muzzer's pet's got little buttons of eyes that don't never have no wild gleam in 'em because he's muzzer's own darling, he was!" said Mrs. Luella Mainprice Jopp.

"'Keep those women away from me,' he whispered, people babbling

A hollow groan escaped Vincent Jopp's ashen lips.

I need not recount the play hole by hole, I think. There are some subjects that are too painful. It was pitiful to watch Vincent Jopp in his downfall. By the end of the first nine his lead had been reduced to one, and his antagonist, rendered a new man by success, was playing magnificent golf. On the next hole he drew level. Then with a superhuman effort Jopp contrived to halve the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth. It seemed as though his iron will might still assert itself, but on the fourteenth the end came.

He had driven a superb ball, outdistancing his opponent by a full fifty yards. The

latter played a good second to within a few feet of the green. And then, as Vincent Jopp was shaping for his stroke, Luella Mainprice gave tongue.

"Vincent!"

tensely. 'How the deuce can I concentrate with all round me?'"

"Well?"

"Vincent, that other man—bad man—not playing fair. When your back was turned just now, he gave his ball a great bang. *I* was watching him!"

"At any rate," said Mrs. Agnes Parsons Jopp, "I do hope, when the game is over, Vincent, that you will remember to cool slowly."

"Flesho!" cried Mrs. Jane Jukes Jopp triumphantly. "I've been trying to remember the name all the afternoon. I saw about it in one of the papers. The advertisements speak most highly of it. You take it before breakfast and again before retiring, and they guarantee it to produce firm, healthy flesh on the most sparsely-covered limbs in next to no time. Now, *will* you remember to get a bottle to-night? It comes in two sizes, the five-shilling (or large size) and the smaller at half a crown. Warwick Armstrong writes that he used it regularly for years."

Vincent Jopp uttered a quavering moan, and his hand, as he took the mashie from his bag, was trembling like an aspen.

Ten minutes later he was on his way back to the club-house, a beaten man.

And so (concluded the Oldest Member) you see that in golf there is no such thing as a soft snap. You can never be certain of the finest player. Anything may happen to the greatest expert at any stage of the game. In a recent competition George Duncan took eleven shots over a hole which eighteen-handicap men generally do in five. No! Back horses or go down to Throgmorton Street and try to take it away from the Rothschilds, and I will applaud you as a shrewd and cautious financier. But to bet at golf is pure gambling.

RAMBLING REMINISCENCES

BY

MATHESON LANG

AS one retraces the years it is curious how small incidents stand out in one's memory to the exclusion of more important happenings. I distinctly remember, for instance, a funny incident which happened at Montreal, where my father, the Rev. Gavin Lang, was minister of St. Andrews Church. A Canadian boy playmate was sitting on the fence of our garden, gazing meditatively at his legs, and even now I can hear him remarking, with a broad Scottish accent :—

"Fancy me wearing pur-r-ple stockings, an' me gran'mither lying dead."

I was only about four years old at the time, for we returned to Scotland when I was five, the most of my boyhood being spent at Inverness. But that one incident of my Montreal days still sticks in my memory.

As a boy, however, I am afraid I was a disappointment to friends and relatives, and particularly to my parents. They could never understand how I became infected with the Thespian germ. Neither could I. I come of clerical stock, and, in fact, believe we can go back for generations and find in each some two or three who have been "parsons." Two of my father's brothers were parsons. One, the late Dr. Marshall Lang, was Principal of Aberdeen University. His son is now Archbishop of York.

My boyish mind, too, was fixed on the Church —but not on the pulpit.

Lorenzo in "The Merchant of Venice."

A part played by Mr. Matheson Lang when a member of the Dramatic Club of St. Andrews University.

Photo. Browne & Co.

A visit from a missionary gave me visions of fighting for the heathen in the wilds of the Congo; tramping the jungle and saving them from lions, tigers, elephants, and alligators, winning their love and gratitude, and in time becoming their white king. And this was before the days of Tarzan and the "movies." Which seems to show that imagination was by no means my weak point. My fickle mind and character, however, soon led me to change when I came under the influence of my elder brother, who eventually joined the King's Own Scottish Borderers. He was very fond of theatricals, and when he enlisted my help in transforming one of the rooms of the house into a private theatre, where, on an impromptu stage of boards laid across the seats of chairs, we recited and acted to each other tabloid plays founded upon the romances of Scott, Fenimore Cooper, Marryat, and other authors dear to boyish hearts, I basely deserted the heathen and the apes and decided to become a rival to Irving.

In my conceit I became

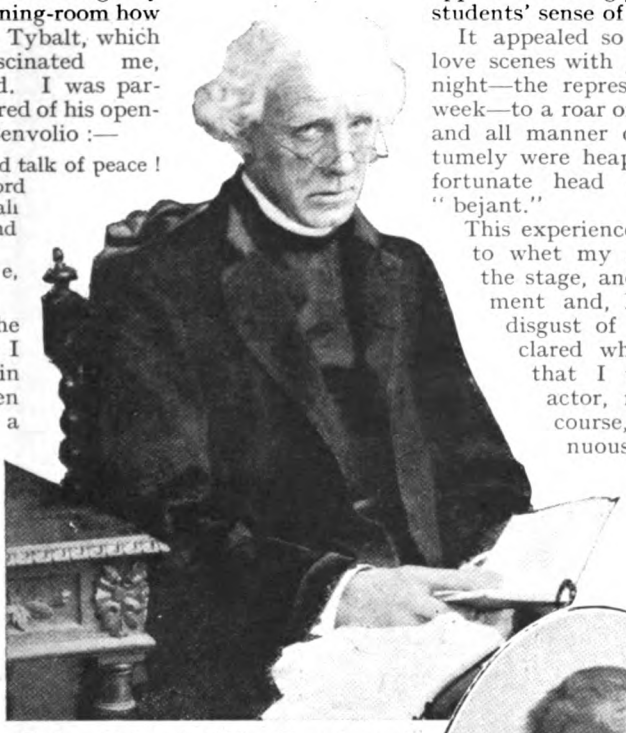
critical of the acting at the local theatre we were permitted to visit. There I made my first acquaintance with "Romeo and Juliet," and I remember showing my brother in our dining-room how the character of Tybalt, which particularly fascinated me, should be played. I was particularly enamoured of his opening remarks to Benvolio :—

> What, drawn, and talk of peace !
> I hate the word
> As I hate hell, all
> Montagues, and
> thee.
> Have at thee,
> coward !

Apart from the fearsome delight I anticipated in using a forbidden word, there was a ring and a swing about the speech that took my fancy mightily.

Now, among the outer glories of the sideboard, as distinguished from the inner treasures of currant bun or, peradventure, strawberry jam, was a set of silver plate and ornaments presented to my father when he bade farewell to his Canadian parishioners. Hotly pressing my brother, the hated Montague, I drove him at the sword's point across the room, until a final lunge sent him hurtling against the sideboard, which immediately gave forth a tremendous tinkling crash of falling plate, ornaments, dishes, and glasses. Then my father came upon the scene, and for some weeks afterwards our interest in the drama languished.

Although my father knew that I spent every penny of my pocket-money on the gallery of the local theatre, he saw nothing but a passing craze, and it was with the sole desire that I should enter the ministry that I was sent to St. Andrews University. The result was disastrous for the family ambition. The college had a dramatic club, which, of course, I joined. At the first annual performance after my arrival I was entrusted with the part of Lorenzo in "The Merchant of Venice," Jessica being played by the very beautiful wife of one of the professors. Now, I was a first-year man, and as such known as a "bejant," a term the origin of which I do not remember, and the idea of a poor worm of a "bejant" making love to a professor's wife, as the action of the play demanded, appealed strongly to my fellow-students' sense of humour.



Father Dolan, in "The Shaughraun."
Photo. Charles & Russell.

It appealed so strongly that my love scenes with Jessica went every night—the representations lasted a week—to a roar of derisive laughter; and all manner of insult and contumely were heaped upon the unfortunate head of the anguished "bejant."

This experience, however, seemed to whet my appetite more for the stage, and, to the astonishment and, I am afraid, the disgust of the family, I declared when I went home that I wanted to be an actor, not a parson. Of course, there was strenuous opposition to my plans. Ultimately, as I was fond of drawing and painting, my father agreed, as a sort of half-way concession, that I should take up drawing seriously.

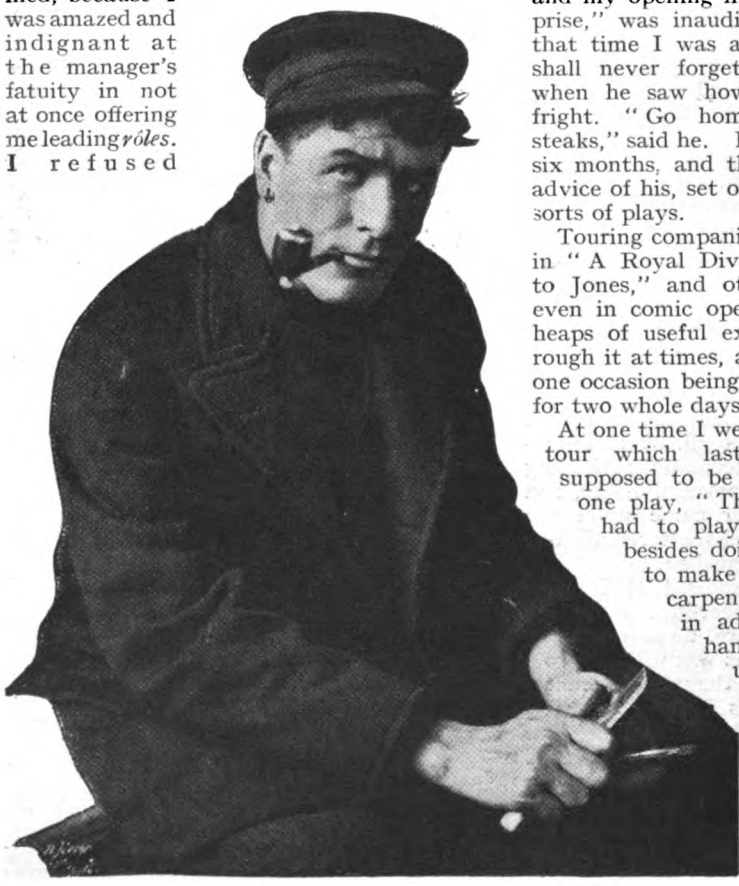
Jaques, in "As You Like It."
Photo. Swain

But his ideas were very different from

mine. For instance, he said, "If you take up drawing there is only one way to make money out of it, and that is by becoming an architect"; and, with this object in view, I was apprenticed at the age of seventeen, and remained in an office for one year.

At the end of that time, however, I took my courage in my hands and told my father of my resolve to become an actor. I am afraid he was grieved; anyhow, he told me that if I went from home I was not to expect any financial help from him, at the same time assuring me that the paternal roof would always shelter me should I at any time change my mind.

An uncle, saying that as I was bent on making a fool of myself he might as well help to expedite the process, offered me an introduction to a London manager with whom he was acquainted, and, negotiations having been opened, this gentleman invited me to come to London to "walk on" at his theatre. I declined the offer. Not, as might be imagined, because I was amazed and indignant at the manager's fatuity in not at once offering me leading *rôles*. I refused because I felt that it would be better for my ultimate chances of success if I kept out of London until I had something to take there beyond colossal ignorance of my work. I had seen Mr. Louis Calvert, to whom I can never be sufficiently grateful for the admirable training I received under his command, on tour in Scotland. It seemed to me that his was the sort of company I should like to join. I found out that he was playing at Wolverhampton, and forthwith went to Wolverhampton in order to see him. The fact that I had no introduction mattered not. I called upon him, told him of my ambition, and he heard me out. He replied that I might come to him for a week or two on trial, when, all being well, he would promote me to the salary list.



Pete, in Hall Caine's play

Photo. "Daily Mirror."

My first appearance was as a convict, wearing chains, in a play called "Proof." Three weeks later, however, one of the company who was playing a small part fell ill, and I took his place. It was a speaking part—the Duke of Orleans in "Richelieu"—and my opening line, "Here's to our enterprise," was inaudible, even to myself. At that time I was a "weedy" youth, and I shall never forget Calvert's words to me when he saw how I suffered from stage-fright. "Go home, boy, and eat beef-steaks," said he. I remained with him about six months, and then, following some more advice of his, set out to get experience in all sorts of plays.

Touring companies followed, and I played in "A Royal Divorce," "What Happened to Jones," and other dramas and farces—even in comic opera—all the while getting heaps of useful experience. But I had to rough it at times, and can well remember on one occasion being without food and money for two whole days.

At one time I went on a Scottish "fit-up" tour which lasted one month. I was supposed to be business manager, but in one play, "The Three Musketeers," I had to play Louis XIII. and Felton, besides doing my other work; and, to make matters worse, our stage carpenter didn't turn up, so that in addition I had to lend a hand at putting up the "fit-up" and shifting the scenery. The stage carpenter was also down to play a part—the captain of the musketeers, in Act I. This I also had to undertake, at a moment's notice. I went on and gagged, improvising as best I could. As I got warmed to the part I talked

hard, saying anything that came into my head, until I heard the manager's voice from the wing saying :—

"Come off, you idiot; you're talking too much."

Following this very disastrous tour, I sought out Sir Frank Benson (he was not, of course, knighted at that time), who had his company in Manchester, and asked him for an engagement.

Like most managers, he told me how much he regretted that his company was full, but he would remember me should anything come along. Then, after a few days, unlike most managers, he sent for me, gave me a small part, and for a period of four years I gradually worked my way up with him.

Those were happy days. Benson, as is well known, is a keen athlete, and, although it is not true that he used to have us out at six o'clock every morning for a ten-mile run, he encouraged us to lead a healthy, athletic life, and what with cricket and other games, to say nothing of the hard and continuous work of the theatre, the years slipped away like magic.

No doubt I had quaint experiences during this time; but at the moment the only unusual incident I can recall relates to a performance of "Hamlet" at a Stratford-on-Avon Shakespeare Festival. Sir Frank's idea was to give "Hamlet" precisely as Shakespeare wrote it, without cut or alteration, and I was cast for Voltimand, Ambassador from Norway, a part usually omitted from the stage versions.

As Voltimand I had to make a long and difficult speech; but on the night of the performance, what between nervousness and the unfamiliarity of my part, I incontinently "dried up," and could mutter only the first and last lines of my speech, and so, to Benson's indignation, "Hamlet," despite all his careful plans, was not given as Shakespeare wrote it.

Othello.

Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

Hamlet—Mr. Matheson Lang's favourite part.

Photo. "Daily Mirror."

I am afraid I rather upset Benson in regard to another *rôle*. I had only been with the company a fortnight when he asked if I would play the part generally known as "the Apparition of the Bleeding Child" in the witches' scene. The lady who usually played this being a cripple with a bad foot, I had some misgivings as to make-up, but consented to take her place. All I had to do was to put up my head through the witch's cauldron and admonish

Macbeth in the following terms :—

> Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth !
> Be bloody, bold, and resolute ; laugh to scorn
> The power of man, for none of woman born
> Shall harm Macbeth.

I made myself up with a lovely pink and white complexion, and one of the ladies of the company lent me a beautiful fluffy flaxen wig. A little red grease-paint adorned the sides of my mouth to give the appearance of a trickle of blood from my lips, and altogether, with my robust thirteen stone or so, I must have made a very incongruous sort of infant. Benson evidently thought so, for when I stuck my head up through the smoke and steam he began to smile. That smile upset me, and I forgot my lines. I got through the " Macbeths " all right, but then, after his line of acknowledgment, I broke down. I managed to get as far as the word " bold " in my second line and there I stuck. Desperately I started again and again. I came to a halt at the same place, and I was just going to make another attempt when Benson's voice broke in angrily, " Get down. Get down." And I got down, and, I may add, I never played that part again.

It was after playing Paolo to Benson's Malatesta in " Paolo and Francesca " that I joined Mrs. Langtry as leading man, and toured America with her. When I returned Miss Ellen Terry was playing " Much Ado About Nothing " at the Imperial Theatre, with Mr. Oscar Asche as Benedick. Mr. Asche, however, was under engagement to return to another theatre, and Miss Terry, hearing of my arrival, sent for me and offered me the part. I asked when I should have to appear, and she named a date but four days later. I suppose I looked rather blank at this intelligence, for she said, " Of course you know the part ? "

" No," I replied, " I'm afraid I don't." " Ahem," she said, severely ; " in my young days we were expected to be letter-perfect in every one of Shakespeare's principal characters."

However, I studied Benedick in the four days and played it eventually for over a year with Miss Terry in London and the provinces.

A funny incident happened on the tour. We were at the Fulham Theatre, and one night, toward the end of the week, she seemed strangely excited. When I was on the stage I could see her in the wings whispering to those around her, although immediately I approached her she suddenly became silent. After a little while, as I was standing near her, she caught my arm and whispered, " Don't tell Lang." When she discovered her mistake the secret had to be told. " Sir Henry Irving is in front, but we didn't like to tell you in case it might make you nervous."

Richard III.
Photo. Ellis & Walery.

Mr. Wu.
Photo. Claude Harris.

At the conclusion of that performance Sir Henry came behind, and I had the pleasure of meeting that most delightful of all actors. He was not a man of many words, but he was charming and encouraging.

I have often been asked what I consider the most exacting of Shakespearean parts. To my mind, Othello is the greatest emotional part, certainly in our language, probably in any. I have played many tragic parts, but none has gripped me like this one, which at times masters me so that I have difficulty in keeping within the bounds of the lines.

Even Salvini, I believe, could play this overpowering part only four times a week. It leaves one physically weary with suffering. A strange part of the psychology of acting is that the actor really enjoys this suffering, just as any artist enjoys the strain which accompanies his work of creating a picture, statue, or any work of art which satisfies him.

Hamlet is undoubtedly my favourite part, and for years I utilized most of my spare time studying him, line by line, mood by mood, always doing my best to get into entire sympathy with the spirit of the play. I refuse to imagine Hamlet a madman. Think for a moment. He was a sensitive youth, young for his years; like many another on the threshold of life, possessing a great love for all things good and pure, and a great hatred of evil; wondering why the latter should exist, and unable to answer the question. From the study he is practically cast into the midst of a riotous Court, full of intrigue and pleasure. No wonder he is appalled. All this was bound to have an influence on such a highly-strung nature, and so caused the madness, which I consider was feigned, at moments to become a reality. In fact, had Hamlet lived to-day he would most likely have consulted some eminent Harley Street specialist on the nerves, and retired for a rest cure into a sanatorium, to emerge after treatment a rational member of society.

The Wandering Jew.
Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

I frequently played Hamlet during my tours in the Colonies and the Far East. In Burma I had my first experience of the native limelight man. The Ghost had just appeared and was solemnly exhorting me. I was kneeling awestruck on the darkened stage, when the limelight man started taking a hand. He had been diligently rehearsed beforehand and was under orders to keep only a dim blue light on the face of the Ghost.

Suddenly, to my horror, I realized that the Ghost's face was turning a delicate mauve. Glancing upwards towards the limelight man's box, I saw him deliberately remove the blue slide, leaving in its place the red one. The Ghost's face now resembled beetroot. I still knelt, but the words I hurled at that limelight man were not such as befitted my attitude. He paid no attention to me (he did not understand a word of English), but went on gently and earnestly twiddling his coloured lights on the face of the Ghost as though he were a coon ghost about to burst into ragtime.

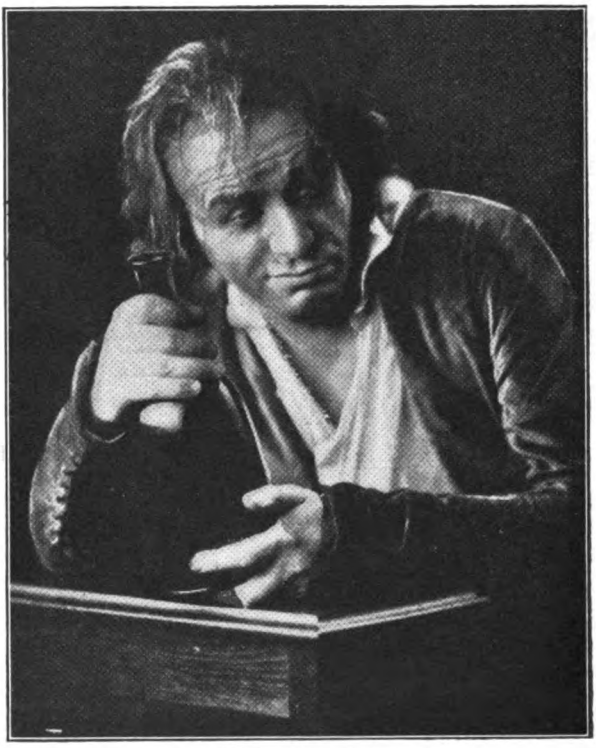
Well, at the end of the scene we gathered round our limelight man. In time the explanation came out. It seems that native Burmese plays are composed of all sorts of things—singing, dancing, tragedy, comedy, and that whenever things on the stage seem to be hanging fire a bit, it is the duty of the limelight man to liven things up a trifle by twiddling the coloured lights about.

Our limelight man was almost in tears. He felt very hurt. He gave us to understand that he had thought the Ghost a trifle dull and wanted to give him some help. He had only wanted to make "Hamlet" hum.

I don't think, however, that this experience was quite so startling as a performance of "Hamlet" played in Japan, wherein the Prince appeared first in a silk hat and

swallow-tail coat, then on a bicycle clad in bright blue cycling suit with striped stockings, then in evening dress with a big bouquet in his buttonhole.

It was during this tour that my wife and I had an extraordinary experience when we played "Richard III." in the West Indies. One night a big negro in the audience got very excited while I, as Richard, was annoying the unhappy Lady Anne, played by my wife. I noticed his agitation, but thought nothing of it until after the performance, when I was told that the negro wanted to see me. Rather curious to know what was the matter with him, I allowed the man to be shown into my dressing-room. He came in, and without any beating about the bush he blurted out, "Why do you treat the Lady Anne like that?" A little taken aback, I replied, "But she is not really Lady Anne." "Who is she, then?" the negro demanded. "She is my wife." "Then you have no right to treat your wife so," shouted the negro, angrily. All my explanations failed to pacify him, and it was with some difficulty that we got rid of him.



Christopher Sly.
Photo. Dorothy Wilding.

Not the least interesting event in my career is the manner in which "Mr. Wu" came to be produced by me at the Strand Theatre, London. After my tour I entered into an arrangement with the late Mr. Louis Meyer, then lessee of the Strand Theatre, to produce a series of plays there with him. When discussing what plays we should do, Mr. Meyer said, "I have a play about China, which I have had for two or three years, and have offered it to several 'stars,' but none of them like it. I don't suppose you will either." "Why?" I asked. "Well, the central figure is Mr. Wu, a large, bland Chinaman, hardly the kind of part to attract London's latest Hamlet and Romeo." "Let me read it," I said. So I took it home and read the play, which proved to be one of my greatest successes.

It was a curious coincidence that Mr. Meyer should have shown me the play, for during my tour I had visited China and had closely studied the characteristics of the people. To this fact I attribute not a little of the success of "Mr. Wu." The popular conception of a Chinaman seemed to be that he was a small, rather ignorant, wily individual, steeped in mediævalism and proud of the length of his pigtail. In reality the present-day Chinaman is full of Western ideas, knowledge, and enterprise. As a business man he is hard to beat. He likes a good play, prefers Shakespeare, is always anxious to learn, and does not make a fetish of his "pigtail." Mr. Wu was typical of the Chinaman as I knew him, and one of the chief merits of the play was the correct atmosphere which my knowledge enabled me to introduce into it.

This experience brings me to the conclusion that an essential part of an actor's training is a tour abroad. It not only widens his experience, but it brings him in touch with new people and ideas, and prevents him from getting into the groove which so often retards the development of an artiste's natural talents.

WHERE WAS WYCH STREET ?

by

STACY AUMONIER

ILLUSTRATED BY CHAS. CROMBIE

IN the public bar of the Wagtail, in Wapping, four men and a woman were drinking beer and discussing diseases. It was not a pretty subject, and the company was certainly not a handsome one. It was a dark November evening, and the dingy lighting of the bar seemed but to emphasize the bleak exterior. Drifts of fog and damp from without mingled with the smoke of shag. The sanded floor was kicked into a muddy morass not unlike the surface of the pavement. An old lady down the street had died from pneumonia the previous evening, and the event supplied a fruitful topic of conversation. The things that one could get! Everywhere were germs eager to destroy one. At any minute the symptoms might break out. And so—one foregathered in a cheerful spot amidst friends, and drank forgetfulness.

Prominent in this little group was Baldwin Meadows, a sallow-faced villain with battered features and prominent cheek-bones, his face cut and scarred by a hundred fights. Ex-seaman, ex-boxer, ex-fish-porter—indeed, to everyone's knowledge, ex-everything. No one knew how he lived. By his side lurched an enormous coloured man who went by the name of Harry Jones. Grinning above a tankard sat a pimply-faced young man who was known as The Agent. Silver rings adorned his fingers. He had no other name, and most emphatically no address, but he "arranged things" for people, and appeared to thrive upon it in a scrambling, fugitive manner. The other two people were Mr. and Mrs. Dawes. Mr. Dawes was an entirely negative person, but Mrs. Dawes shone by virtue of a high, whining, insistent voice, keyed to within half a note of hysteria.

Then, at one point, the conversation suddenly took a peculiar turn. It came about through Mrs. Dawes mentioning that her aunt, who died from eating tinned lobster, used to work in a corset shop in Wych Street. When she said that, The Agent, whose right eye appeared to survey the ceiling, whilst his left eye looked over the other side of his tankard, remarked:—

"Where was Wych Street, ma?"

"Lord!" exclaimed Mrs. Dawes. "Don't you know, dearie? You must be a young 'un, you must. Why, when I was a gal everyone knew Wych Street. It was just down there where they built the Kingsway, like."

Baldwin Meadows cleared his throat, and said:—

"Wych Street used to be a turnin' runnin' from Long Acre into Wellington Street."

"Oh, no, old boy," chipped in Mr. Dawes, who always treated the ex-man with great deference. "If you'll excuse me, Wych Street was a narrow lane at the back of the old Globe Theatre, that used to pass by the church."

"I know what I'm talkin' about," growled Meadows.

Mrs. Dawes's high nasal whine broke in:—

"Hi, Mr. Booth, you used ter know yer wye abaht. Where was Wych Street?"

Mr. Booth, the proprietor, was polishing a tap. He looked up.

"Wych Street? Yus, of course I knoo Wych Street. Used to go there with some of the boys—when I was Covent Garden way. It was at right angles to the Strand, just east of Wellington Street."

"No, it warn't. It were alongside the Strand, before yer come to Wellington Street."

The coloured man took no part in the discussion, one street and one city being alike to him, provided he could obtain the material comforts dear to his heart; but the others carried it on with a certain amount of acerbity.

Before any agreement had been arrived at three other men entered the bar. The quick eye of Meadows recognized them at once as three of what was known at that time as "The Gallows Ring." Every member of "The Gallows Ring" had done time, but

"She stood up threateningly, and one of Ben's supporters gave her a gentle push

they still carried on a lucrative industry devoted to blackmail, intimidation, shoplifting, and some of the clumsier recreations. Their leader, Ben Orming, had served seven years for bashing a Chinaman down at Rotherhithe.

"The Gallows Ring" was not popular in Wapping, for the reason that many of their depredations had been inflicted upon their own class. When Meadows and Harry Jones took it into their heads to do a little wild prancing they took the trouble to go up into the West-end. They considered "The Gallows Ring" an ungentlemanly set; nevertheless, they always treated them with a certain external deference—an unpleasant crowd to quarrel with.

Ben Orming ordered beer for the three of them, and they leant against the bar and whispered in sullen accents. Something had evidently miscarried with the Ring. Mrs. Dawes continued to whine above the general drone of the bar. Suddenly she said:—

"Ben, you're a hot old devil, you are. We was just 'aving a discussion like. Where was Wych Street?"

Ben scowled at her, and she continued:—

"Some sez it was one place, some sez it was another. I *know* where it was, 'cors my aunt what died from blood p'ison, after eatin' tinned lobster, used to work at a corset shop——"

"Yus," barked Ben, emphatically. "I know where Wych Street was—it was just sarth of the river, afore yer come to Waterloo Station."

backwards. In three minutes the bar was in a complete state of pandemonium."

It was then that the coloured man, who up to that point had taken no part in the discussion, thought fit to intervene.

"Nope. You's all wrong, cap'n. Wych Street were alongside de church, way over where de Strand takes a side-line up west."

Ben turned on him fiercely.

"What the blazes does a blanketty nigger know abaht it? I've told yer where Wych Street was."

"Yus, and I know where it was," interposed Meadows. "Yer both wrong. Wych Street was a turning running from Long Acre into Wellington Street."

"I didn't ask yer what *you* thought," growled Ben.

"Well, I suppose I've a right to an opinion?"

"You always think you know everything, you do."

"You can just keep yer mouth shut."

"It 'ud take more'n you to shut it."

Mr. Booth thought it advisable at this juncture to bawl across the bar:—

"Now, gentlemen, no quarrelling—please."

The affair might have subsided at that point, but for Mrs. Dawes. Her emotions over the death of the old lady in the street had been so stirred that she had been, almost unconsciously, drinking too much gin. She suddenly screamed out:—

"Don't you take no lip from 'im, Mr. Medders. The dirty, thieving devil, 'e always thinks 'e's goin' to come it over everyone."

She stood up threateningly, and one of

Ben's supporters gave her a gentle push backwards. In three minutes the bar was in a complete state of pandemonium. The three members of "The Gallows Ring" fought two men and a woman, for Mr. Dawes merely stood in a corner and screamed out :—

"Don't! Don't!"

Mrs. Dawes stabbed the man who had pushed her through the wrist with a hatpin. Meadows and Ben Orming closed on each other and fought savagely with the naked fists. A lucky blow early in the encounter sent Meadows reeling against the wall, with blood streaming down his temple. Then the coloured man hurled a pewter tankard straight at Ben and it hit him on the knuckles. The pain maddened him to a frenzy. His other supporter had immediately got to grips with Harry Jones, and picked up one of the high stools and, seizing an opportunity, brought it down crash on to the coloured man's skull.

The whole affair was a matter of minutes. Mr. Booth was bawling out in the street. A whistle sounded. People were running in all directions.

"Beat it! Beat it, for God's sake!" called the man who had been stabbed through the wrist. His face was very white, and he was obviously about to faint.

Ben and the other man, whose name was Toller, dashed to the door. On the pavement there was a confused scramble. Blows were struck indiscriminately. Two policemen appeared. One was laid *hors de combat* by a kick on the knee-cap from Toller. The two men fled into the darkness, followed by a hue-and-cry. Born and bred in the locality, they took every advantage of their knowledge. They tacked through alleys and raced down dark mews, and clambered over walls. Fortunately for them, the people they passed, who might have tripped them up or aided in the pursuit, merely fled indoors. The people in Wapping are not always on the side of the pursuer. But the police held on. At last Ben and Toller slipped through the door of an empty house in Aztec Street barely ten yards ahead of their nearest pursuer. Blows rained on the door, but they slipped the bolts, and then fell panting to the floor. When Ben could speak, he said :—

"If they cop us, it means swinging."

"Was the nigger done in?"

"I think so. But even if 'e wasn't, there was that other affair the night before last. The game's up."

The ground-floor rooms were shuttered and bolted, but they knew that the police would probably force the front door. At the back there was no escape, only a narrow stable yard, where lanterns were already flashing. The roof only extended thirty yards either way, and the police would probably take possession of it. They made a round of the house, which was sketchily furnished. There was a loaf, a small piece of mutton, and a bottle of pickles, and—the most precious possession—three bottles of whisky. Each man drank half a glass of neat whisky; then Ben said: "We'll be able to keep 'em quiet for a bit, anyway," and he went and fetched an old twelve-bore gun and a case of cartridges. Toller was opposed to this last desperate resort, but Ben continued to murmur, "It means swinging, anyway."

AND thus began the notorious siege of Aztec Street. It lasted three days and four nights. You may remember that, on forcing a panel of the front door, Sub-Inspector Wraithe, of the V Division, was shot through the chest. The police then tried other methods. A hose was brought into play, without effect. Two policemen were killed and four wounded. The military was requisitioned. The street was picketed. Snipers occupied windows of the houses opposite. A distinguished member of the Cabinet drove down in a motor-car, and directed operations in a top-hat. It was the introduction of poison-gas which was the ultimate cause of the downfall of the citadel. The body of Ben Orming was never found, but that of Toller was discovered near the front door, with a bullet through his heart. The medical officer to the Court pronounced that the man had been dead three days, but whether killed by a chance bullet from a sniper or whether killed deliberately by his fellow-criminal was never revealed. For when the end came Orming had apparently planned a final act of venom. It was known that in the basement a considerable quantity of petrol had been stored. The contents had probably been carefully distributed over the most inflammable materials in the top rooms. The fire broke out, as one witness described it, "almost like an explosion." Orming must have perished in this. The roof blazed up, and the sparks carried across the yard and started a stack of light timber in the annexe of Messrs. Morrel's piano-factory. The factory and two blocks of tenement buildings were burnt to the ground. The estimated cost of the destruction was one hundred and eighty thousand pounds. The casualties amounted to seven killed and fifteen wounded.

AT the inquiry held under Chief Justice Pengammon various odd interesting facts were revealed. Mr. Lowes-Parlby, the brilliant young K.C., distinguished himself by his searching cross-examination of many witnesses. At one point a certain Mrs. Dawes was put in the box.

" Now," said Mr. Lowes-Parlby, " I understand that on the evening in question, Mrs. Dawes, you, and the victims, and these other people who have been mentioned, were all seated in the public bar of the Wagtail, enjoying its no doubt excellent hospitality and indulging in a friendly discussion. Is that so ? "

" Yes, sir."

" Now, will you tell his lordship what you were discussing ? "

" Diseases, sir."

" Diseases ! And did the argument become acrimonious ? "

" Pardon ? "

" Was there a serious dispute about diseases ? "

" No, sir."

" Well, what was the subject of the dispute ? "

" We was arguin' as to where Wych Street was, sir."

" What's that ? " said his lordship.

" The witness states, my lord, that they were arguing as to where Wych Street was."

" Wych Street ? Do you mean W-Y-C-H ? "

" Yes, sir."

" You mean the narrow old street that used to run across the site of what is now the Gaiety Theatre ? "

Mr. Lowes-Parlby smiled in his most charming manner.

" Yes, my lord, I believe the witness refers to the same street you mention, though, if I may be allowed to qualify your lordship's description of the locality, may I suggest that it was a little further east—at the side of the old Globe Theatre, which was adjacent to St. Martin's in the Strand ? That is the street you were all arguing about, isn't it, Mrs. Dawes ? "

" Well, sir, my aunt who died from eating tinned lobster used to work at a corset-shop. I ought to know."

His lordship ignored the witness. He turned to the counsel rather peevishly.

" Mr. Lowes-Parlby, when I was your age I used to pass through Wych Street every day of my life. I did so for nearly twelve years. I think it hardly necessary for you to contradict me."

The counsel bowed. It was not his place to dispute with a Chief Justice, although that Chief Justice be a hopeless old fool ; but another eminent K.C., an elderly man with a tawny beard, rose in the body of the court, and said :—

" If I may be allowed to interpose, your lordship, I also spent a great deal of my youth passing through Wych Street. I have gone into the matter, comparing past and present Ordnance Survey maps. If I am not mistaken, the street the witness was referring to began near the hoarding at the entrance to Kingsway and ended at the back of what is now the Aldwych Theatre."

" Oh, no, Mr. Backer ! " exclaimed Lowes-Parlby.

His lordship removed his glasses and snapped out :—

" The matter is entirely irrelevant to the case."

It certainly was, but the brief passage-of-arms left an unpleasant tang of bitterness behind. It was observed that Mr. Lowes-Parlby never again quite got the prehensile grip upon his cross-examination that he had shown in his treatment of the earlier witnesses. The coloured man, Harry Jones, had died in hospital, but Mr. Booth, the proprietor of the Wagtail, Baldwin Meadows, Mr. Dawes, and the man who was stabbed in the wrist all gave evidence of a rather nugatory character. Lowes-Parlby could do nothing with it. The findings of this Special Inquiry do not concern us. It is sufficient to say that the witnesses already mentioned all returned to Wapping. The man who had received the thrust of a hatpin through his wrist did not think it advisable to take any action against Mrs. Dawes. He was pleasantly relieved to find that he was only required as a witness of an abortive discussion.

IN a few weeks' time the great Aztec Street Siege remained only a romantic memory to the majority of Londoners. To Lowes-Parlby the little dispute with Chief Justice Pengammon rankled unreasonably. It is annoying to be publicly snubbed for making a statement which you know to be absolutely true, and which you have even taken pains to verify. And Lowes-Parlby was a young man accustomed to score. He made a point of looking everything up, of being prepared for an adversary thoroughly. He liked to give the appearance of knowing everything. The brilliant career just ahead of him at times dazzled him. He was one of the darlings of the gods. Everything came to Lowes-Parlby. His father had distinguished himself at the Bar before him, and had amassed a modest fortune. He was an only son. At Oxford he had carried off every possible degree. He was already being spoken of for very high political honours. But the most sparkling jewel in the crown of his successes was Lady Adela Charters, the daughter of Lord Vermeer, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. She was his *fiancée*, and it was considered the most brilliant match of the season. She was young and almost pretty, and Lord Vermeer was immensely wealthy and one of the most influential men in Great Britain. Such a combination was irresistible. There seemed to be nothing missing in the life of Francis Lowes-Parlby, K.C.

ONE of the most regular and absorbed spectators at the Aztec Street inquiry was old Stephen Garrit. Stephen Garrit held a unique but quite inconspicuous position in the legal world at that time. He was a friend of judges, a specialist at various abstruse legal rulings, a man of remarkable memory, and yet—an amateur. He had never taken silk, never eaten the requisite dinners, never passed an examination in his life; but the law of evidence was meat and drink to him. He passed his life in the Temple, where he had chambers. Some of the most eminent counsel in the world would take his opinion, or come to him for advice. He was very old, very silent, and very absorbed. He attended every meeting of the Aztec Street inquiry, but from beginning to end he never volunteered an opinion.

After the inquiry was over he went and visited an old friend at the London Survey Office. He spent two mornings examining maps. After that he spent two mornings pottering about the Strand, Kingsway, and Aldwych; then he worked out some careful calculations on a ruled chart. He entered the particulars in a little book which he kept for purposes of that kind, and then retired to his chambers to study other matters. But before doing so, he entered a little apophthegm in another book. It was apparently a book in which he intended to compile a summary of his legal experiences. The sentence ran:—

"The basic trouble is that people make statements without sufficient data."

Old Stephen need not have appeared in this story at all, except for the fact that he was present at the dinner at Lord Vermeer's, where a rather deplorable incident occurred. And you must acknowledge that in the circumstances it is useful to have such a valuable and efficient witness.

Lord Vermeer was a competent, forceful man, a little quick-tempered and autocratic. He came from Lancashire, and before entering politics had made an enormous fortune out of borax, artificial manure, and starch.

It was a small dinner-party, with a motive behind it. His principal guest was Mr. Sandeman, the London agent of the Ameer of Bakkan. Lord Vermeer was very anxious to impress Mr. Sandeman and to be very friendly with him: the reasons will appear later. Mr. Sandeman was a self-confessed cosmopolitan. He spoke seven languages and professed to be equally at home in any capital in Europe. London had been his headquarters for over twenty years. Lord Vermeer also invited Mr. Arthur Toombs, a colleague in the Cabinet, his prospective son-in-law, Lowes-Parlby, K.C., James Trolley, a very tame Socialist M.P., and Sir Henry and Lady Breyd, the two latter being invited, not because Sir Henry was of any use, but because Lady Breyd was a pretty and brilliant woman who might amuse his principal guest. The sixth guest was Stephen Garrit.

The dinner was a great success. When the succession of courses eventually came to a stop, and the ladies had retired, Lord Vermeer conducted his male guests into another room for a ten-minutes' smoke before rejoining them. It was then that the unfortunate incident occurred. There was no love lost between Lowes-Parlby and Mr. Sandeman. It is difficult to ascribe the real reason of their mutual animosity, but on the several occasions when they had met there had invariably passed a certain sardonic by-play. They were both clever, both comparatively young, each a little suspect and jealous of the other; moreover, it was said in some quarters that Mr. Sandeman had had intentions himself with regard to Lord Vermeer's daughter, that he had been on the point of a proposal when Lowes-Parlby had butted in and forestalled him. Mr. Sandeman had dined well, and he was in the mood to dazzle with a display of his varied knowledge and experiences. The conversation drifted from a discussion of the rival claims of great cities to the slow, inevitable removal of old landmarks. There had been a slightly acrimonious disagreement between Lowes-Parlby and Mr. Sandeman as to the claims of Budapest and Lisbon, and Mr. Sandeman had scored because he extracted from his rival a confession that, though he had spent two months in Budapest, he had only spent two days in Lisbon. Mr. Sandeman had lived for four years in either city. Lowes-Parlby changed the subject abruptly.

"Talking of landmarks," he said, "we had a queer point arise in that Aztec Street Inquiry. The original dispute arose owing to a discussion between a crowd of people in a pub. as to where Wych Street was."

"I remember," said Lord Vermeer. "A perfectly absurd discussion. Why, I should have thought that any man over forty would remember exactly where it was."

"Where would you say it was, sir?" asked Lowes-Parlby.

"Why, to be sure, it ran from the corner of Chancery Lane and ended at the second turning after the Law Courts, going west."

Lowes-Parlby was about to reply, when Mr. Sandeman cleared his throat and said, in his supercilious, oily voice:—

"Excuse me, my lord. I know my Paris, and Vienna, and Lisbon, every brick and stone, but I look upon London as my home. I know my London even better. I have a perfectly clear recollection of Wych Street.

When I was a student I used to visit there to buy books. It ran parallel to New Oxford Street on the south side, just between it and Lincoln's Inn Fields."

There was something about this assertion that infuriated Lowes-Parlby. In the first place, it was so hopelessly wrong and so insufferably asserted. In the second place, he was already smarting under the indignity of being shown up about Lisbon. And then there suddenly flashed through his mind the wretched incident when he had been publicly snubbed by Justice Pengammon about the very same point; and he knew that he was right each time. Damn Wych Street! He turned on Mr. Sandeman.

"Oh, nonsense! You may know something about these—eastern cities; you certainly know nothing about London if you make a statement like that. Wych Street was a little further east of what is now the Gaiety Theatre. It used to run by the side of the old Globe Theatre, parallel to the Strand."

"The counsel bowed. It was not his place to dispute with a Chief Justice, although that Chief Justice be a hopeless old fool."

The dark moustache of Mr. Sandeman shot upwards, revealing a narrow line of yellow teeth. He uttered a sound that was a mingling of contempt and derision; then he drawled out:—

"Really? How wonderful—to have such comprehensive knowledge!"

He laughed, and his small eyes fixed his rival. Lowes-Parlby flushed a deep red. He gulped down half a glass of port and muttered just above a whisper: "Damned impudence!" Then, in the rudest manner he could display, he turned his back deliberately on Sandeman and walked out of the room.

IN the company of Adela he tried to forget the little contretemps. The whole thing was so absurd—so utterly undignified. As though *he* didn't know! It was the little accumulation of pin-pricks all arising out of that one argument. The result had suddenly goaded him to—well, being rude, to say the least of it. It wasn't that Sandeman mattered. To the devil with Sandeman! But what would his future father-in-law think? He had never before given way to any show of ill-temper before him. He forced himself into a mood of rather fatuous jocularity. Adela was at her best in those moods. They would have lots of fun together in the days to come. Her almost pretty, not too clever face was dimpled with kittenish glee. Life was a tremendous rag to her. They were expecting Toccata, the famous opera-singer. She had been engaged at a very high fee to come on from Covent Garden. Mr. Sandeman was very fond of music. Adela was laughing, and discussing which was the most honourable position for the great Sandeman to occupy. There came to Lowes-Parlby a sudden abrupt misgiving. What sort of wife would this be to him when they were not just fooling? He immediately dismissed the curious, furtive little stab of doubt. The splendid proportions of the room calmed his senses. A huge bowl of dark red roses quickened his perceptions. His career . . . The door opened. But it was not La Toccata. It was one of the household flunkies. Lowes-Parlby turned again to his inamorata.

"Excuse me, sir. His lordship says will you kindly go and see him in the library?"

Lowes-Parlby regarded the messenger, and his heart beat quickly. An uncontrollable presage of evil racked his nerve-centres. Something had gone wrong; and yet the whole thing was so absurd, trivial. In a crisis—well, he could always apologize. He smiled confidently at Adela, and said:—

"Why, of course; with pleasure. Please excuse me, dear."

He followed the impressive servant out of the room. His foot had barely touched the carpet of the library when he realized that his worst apprehensions were to be plumbed to the depths. For a moment he thought Lord Vermeer was alone, then he observed old Stephen Garrit, lying in an easy-chair in the corner like a piece of crumpled parchment. Lord Vermeer did not beat about the bush. When the door was closed, he bawled out, savagely:—

"What the devil have you done?"

"Excuse me, sir. I'm afraid I don't understand. Is it Sandeman——?"

"Sandeman has gone."

"Oh, I'm sorry."

"Sorry! By God, I should think you might be sorry! You insulted him. My prospective son-in-law insulted him in my own house!"

"I'm awfully sorry. I didn't realize——"

"Realize! Sit down, and don't assume for one moment that you continue to be my prospective son-in-law. Your insult was a most intolerable piece of effrontery, not only to him, but to me."

"But I——"

"Listen to me. Do you know that the Government were on the verge of concluding a most far-reaching treaty with that man? Do you know that the position was just touch-and-go? The concessions we were prepared to make would have cost the State thirty million pounds, and it would have been cheap. Do you hear that? It would have been cheap! Bakkan is one of the most vulnerable outposts of the Empire. It is a terrible danger-zone. If certain Powers can usurp our authority—and, mark you, the whole blamed place is already riddled with this new pernicious doctrine—you know what I mean—before we know where we are the whole East will be in a blaze. India! My God! This contract we were negotiating would have countered this outward thrust. And you, you blockhead, you come here and insult the man upon whose word the whole thing depends."

"I really can't see, sir, how I should know all this."

"You can't see it! But, you fool, you seemed to go out of your way. You insulted him about the merest quibble—in my house!"

"He said he knew where Wych Street was. He was quite wrong. I corrected him."

"Wych Street! Wych Street be damned! If he said Wych Street was in the moon, you should have agreed with him. There was no call to act in the way you did. And you—you think of going into politics!"

The somewhat cynical inference of this remark went unnoticed. Lowes-Parlby was too unnerved. He mumbled:—

"I'm very sorry."

"'Excuse me, sir. His lordship says will you kindly go and see him in the library.'"

"I don't want your sorrow. I want something more practical."

"What's that, sir?"

"You will drive straight to Mr. Sandeman's, find him, and apologize. Tell him you find that he was right about Wych Street after all. If you can't find him to-night, you must find him to-morrow morning. I give you till midday to-morrow. If by that time you have not offered a handsome apology to Mr. Sandeman, you do not enter this house again, you do not see my daughter again. Moreover, all the power I possess will be devoted to hounding you out of that profession you have dishonoured. Now you can go."

Dazed and shaken, Lowes-Parlby drove back to his flat at Knightsbridge. Before acting he must have time to think. Lord Vermeer had given him till to-morrow midday. Any apologizing that was done should be done after a night's reflection. The fundamental purposes of his being were to be tested. He knew that. He was at a great crossing. Some deep instinct within him was grossly outraged. Is it that a point comes when success demands that a man shall sell his soul? It was all so absurdly trivial—a mere argument about the position of a street that had ceased to exist. As Lord Vermeer said, what did it matter about Wych Street?

Of course he should apologize. It would hurt horribly to do so, but would a man sacrifice everything on account of some footling argument about a street?

In his own rooms, Lowes-Parlby put on a dressing-gown, and, lighting a pipe, he sat before the fire. He would have given anything for companionship at such a moment—the right companionship. How lovely it would be to have—a woman, just the right woman, to talk this all over with; someone who understood and svmpathized. A sudden

vision came to him of Adela's face grinning about the prospective visit of La Toccata, and again the low voice of misgiving whispered in his ears. Would Adela be—just the right woman? In very truth, did he really love Adela? Or was it all—a rag? Was life a rag—a game played by lawyers, politicians, and people?

The fire burned low, but still he continued to sit thinking, his mind principally occupied with the dazzling visions of the future. It was past midnight when he suddenly muttered a low "Damn!" and walked to the bureau. He took up a pen and wrote :—

"DEAR MR. SANDEMAN,—I must apologize for acting so rudely to you last night. It was quite unpardonable of me, especially as I since find, on going into the matter, that you were quite right about the position of Wych Street. I can't think how I made the mistake. Please forgive me.—Yours cordially,

"FRANCIS LOWES-PARLBY."

Having written this, he sighed and went to bed. One might have imagined at that point that the matter was finished. But there are certain little greedy demons of conscience that require a lot of stilling, and they kept Lowes-Parlby awake more than half the night. He kept on repeating to himself, "It's all positively absurd!" But the little greedy demons pranced around the bed, and they began to group things into two definite issues. On the one side, the great appearances; on the other, something at the back of it all, something deep, fundamental, something that could only be expressed by one word—truth. If he had *really* loved Adela—if he weren't so absolutely certain that Sandeman was wrong and he was right—why should he have to say that Wych Street was where it wasn't? "Isn't there, after all," said one of the little demons, "something which makes for greater happiness than success? Confess this, and we'll let you sleep."

Perhaps that is one of the most potent weapons the little demons possess. However full our lives may be, we ever long for moments of tranquillity. And conscience holds before our eyes some mirror of an ultimate tranquillity. Lowes-Parlby was certainly not himself. The gay, debonair, and brilliant egoist was tortured, and tortured almost beyond control; and it had all apparently arisen through the ridiculous discussion about a street. At a quarter past three in the morning he arose from his bed with a groan, and, going into the other room, he tore the letter to Mr. Sandeman to pieces.

THREE weeks later old Stephen Garrit was lunching with the Lord Chief Justice. They were old friends, and they never found it incumbent to be very conversational. The lunch was an excellent, but frugal, meal. They both ate slowly and thoughtfully, and their drink was water. It was not till they reached the dessert stage that his lordship indulged in any very informative comment, and then he recounted to Stephen the details of a recent case in which he considered that the presiding judge had, by an unprecedented paralogy, misinterpreted the Law of Evidence. Stephen listened with absorbed attention. He took two cob-nuts from the silver dish, and turned them over meditatively, without cracking them. When his lordship had completely stated his opinion and peeled a pear, Stephen mumbled :—

"I have been impressed, very impressed indeed. Even in my own field of—limited observation—the opinion of an outsider, you may say—so often it happens—the trouble caused by an affirmation without sufficiently established data. I have seen lives lost, ruin brought about, endless suffering. Only last week, a young man—a brilliant career—almost shattered. People make statements without—— "

He put the nuts back on the dish, and then, in an apparently irrelevant manner, he said abruptly :—

"Do you remember Wych Street, my lord?"

The Lord Chief Justice grunted.

"Wych Street! Of course I do."

"Where would you say it was, my lord?"

"Why, here, of course."

His lordship took a pencil from his pocket and sketched a plan on the tablecloth.

"It used to run from there to here."

Stephen adjusted his glasses and carefully examined the plan. He took a long time to do this, and when he had finished his hand instinctively went towards a breast pocket where he kept a note-book with little squared pages. Then he stopped and sighed. After all, why argue with the Law? The Law was like that—an excellent thing, not infallible, of course (even the plan of the Lord Chief Justice was a quarter of a mile out), but still an excellent, a wonderful thing. He examined the bony knuckles of his hands and yawned slightly.

"Do you remember it?" said the Lord Chief Justice.

Stephen nodded sagely, and his voice seemed to come from a long way off :—

"Yes, I remember it, my lord. It was a melancholy little street."

(Where *was* Wych Street? If you are not sure, consult the map on the back of the frontispiece of this number.)

A BIT OF ORANGE PEEL

by

"SAPPER"
(H·C·McNEILE)

ILLUSTRATED BY
W·R·S·STOTT

THERE were several of us in the Soldier's comfortable smoking-room. The ladies had retired for the night; but in spite of the appalling thickness of the atmosphere, none of us seemed disposed to follow their example.

After all, it was a special occasion; I don't think we had foregathered — the whole bunch of us—since we left school. And that was—well, a good many years ago.

The Soldier brought it on himself. No man should use the phrase "That reminds me" if he doesn't want trouble. Especially just after the Stockbroker had facetiously alluded to his aunt slipping up on some orange peel. Why aunts slipping on orange peel have been invariably regarded as humorists ever since the time of Neolithic man, I don't know, and I suppose it doesn't really matter. But we pinned the Soldier down, and after a brief siege he capitulated.

You can set your minds at rest about one thing, you fellows, began the Soldier, with a grin. My yarn isn't about the war. There have been quite enough lies told already about that performance without my adding to the number. No; my story concerns peace soldiering, and, strangely enough, I had an ocular demonstration when dining at the Ritz two nights ago that everything had finished up quite satisfactorily, in the approved story-book manner. At least, when I say quite satisfactorily—there was a price, and it was paid by one of the principal actors. But that is the unchangeable rule: one can but shrug one's shoulders and play accordingly.

THE regiment—I was a squadron-leader at the time—was quartered at Murchester. Not a bad station at all: good shooting, very fair hunting, especially if you didn't scorn the carted stag, polo, and most excellent cricket. Also some delightful houses in the neighbourhood; and as we'd just come home from our foreign tour we found the place greatly to our liking. London was an hour and a bit by train; in fact, there are many worse stations in England than the spot I have labelled Murchester.

The only fly in the ointment when we first arrived was a fairly natural one, and a thing which only time could cure. The men were a bit restive. We'd been abroad, don't forget, for more than ten years—India, Egypt, South Africa—and the feel of the old country under their feet unsettled 'em temporarily. Nothing very bad, but an epidemic of absence without leave and desertion broke out, and the officers had to settle down to pull things together. Continual courts-martial for desertion don't do a regiment any good with the powers that be, and we had to stop it.

Of course, one of the first things to look to, when any trouble of that sort is occurring, is the general type and standard of your N.C.O.'s. In my squadron they were good, though just a little on the young side. I

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remember one day I discussed the matter pretty thoroughly with the squadron sergeant-major—an absolute top-notcher.

"They're all right, sir," he said. "In another two or three years there will be none better in the British Army. Especially Trevor."

"Ah! Sergeant-Major," I said, looking him straight in the face, "you think Trevor is a good man, do you?"

"The best we've got, sir," he answered quietly, and he stared straight back at me.

"You weren't so sure when he first came," I reminded him.

"Well, I reckon there was a bit of jealousy, sir," he replied, "his coming in from the link regiment over a good many of the chaps' heads. But he's been with us now three months—and we know him better."

"I wish I could say the same," I answered. "He defeats me, does Sergeant Trevor."

The Sergeant-Major smiled quietly. "Does he, sir? I shouldn't have thought he would have. That there bloke Kipling has written about the likes of Trevor."

"Kipling has written a good deal about the Army," I said, with an answering smile. "Mulvaney and Co. are classics."

"It's not Mulvaney I'm meaning, sir," he answered. "But didn't he write a little bit of poetry about 'Gentlemen-rankers out on the spree'?"

"Why, yes, he did." I lit a cigarette thoughtfully. "I'd guessed that much, Manfield. Is Trevor his real name?"

"I don't know, sir," and at that moment the subject of our discussion walked past and saluted.

"Sergeant Trevor," I called after him, on the spur of the moment, and he came up at the double. I hadn't anything really to say to him, but ever since he'd joined us he'd puzzled me, and though, as the sergeant-major said, the other non-commissioned officers might know him better, I certainly didn't.

"You're a bit of a cricketer, aren't you?" I said, as he came up.

A faint smile flickered across his face at my question. "I used to play quite a lot, sir," he answered.

"Good; we want to get games going really strong." I talked with them both—squadron "shop"—a bit longer, and all the time I was trying to probe behind the impassive mask of Trevor's face. Incidentally, I think he knew it; once or twice I caught a faint gleam of amusement in his eyes—a gleam that seemed to me a little weary. And when I left them and went across the parade ground towards the mess, his face haunted me. I hadn't probed—not the eighth of an inch; he was still as much a mystery as ever. But he'd got a pair of deep blue eyes, and though I wasn't a girl to be attracted by a man's eyes, I couldn't get his out of my mind. They baffled me; the man himself baffled me—and I've always disliked being baffled.

IT was a few nights after, in mess, that the next piece in the puzzle came along. We had in the regiment—he was killed in the war, poor devil!—a fellow of the name of Blenton, a fairly senior captain. He wasn't in my squadron, and his chief claim to notoriety was as a cricketer. Had he been able to play regularly he would have been easily up to first-class form—as it was he periodically turned out for the county; but he used to go in first wicket down for the Army. So you can gather his sort of form.

It was over the port that the conversation cropped up, and it interested me because it was about Trevor. As far as cricket was concerned I hardly knew which end of a bat one held.

"Dog-face has got a winner," I heard Blenton say across the table. I may say that I answered to that tactful sobriquet, for reasons into which we need not enter. "One Sergeant Trevor in your squadron, old boy," he turned to me. "I was watching him at the nets to-night."

"Is he any good?" I said.

"My dear fellow," answered Blenton, deliberately, "he is out and away the best bat we've had in the regiment for years. He's up to Army form!"

"Who's that?" demanded the commanding officer, sitting up and taking notice at once.

"Sergeant Trevor in A squadron, Colonel," said Blenton. "I was watching him this evening at nets. Of course, the bowling was tripe, but he's in a completely different class to the average soldier cricketer."

"Did you talk to him?" I asked, curiously.

"I did. And he struck me as being singularly uncommunicative. Asked him where he learnt his cricket, and he hummed and hawed, and finally said he'd played a lot in his village before joining the Army. I couldn't quite make him out, Dog-face. And why the devil didn't he play for us out in Jo'burg?"

"Because he only joined a couple of months before we sailed," I answered. "Came with that last draft we got."

"Well, I wish we had a few more trained in his village," said Blenton. "We could do with them."

After mess, I tackled Philip Blenton in the ante-room.

"What's your candid opinion of Trevor, Philip?" I demanded.

He stopped on his way to play bridge, and bit the end off his cigar.

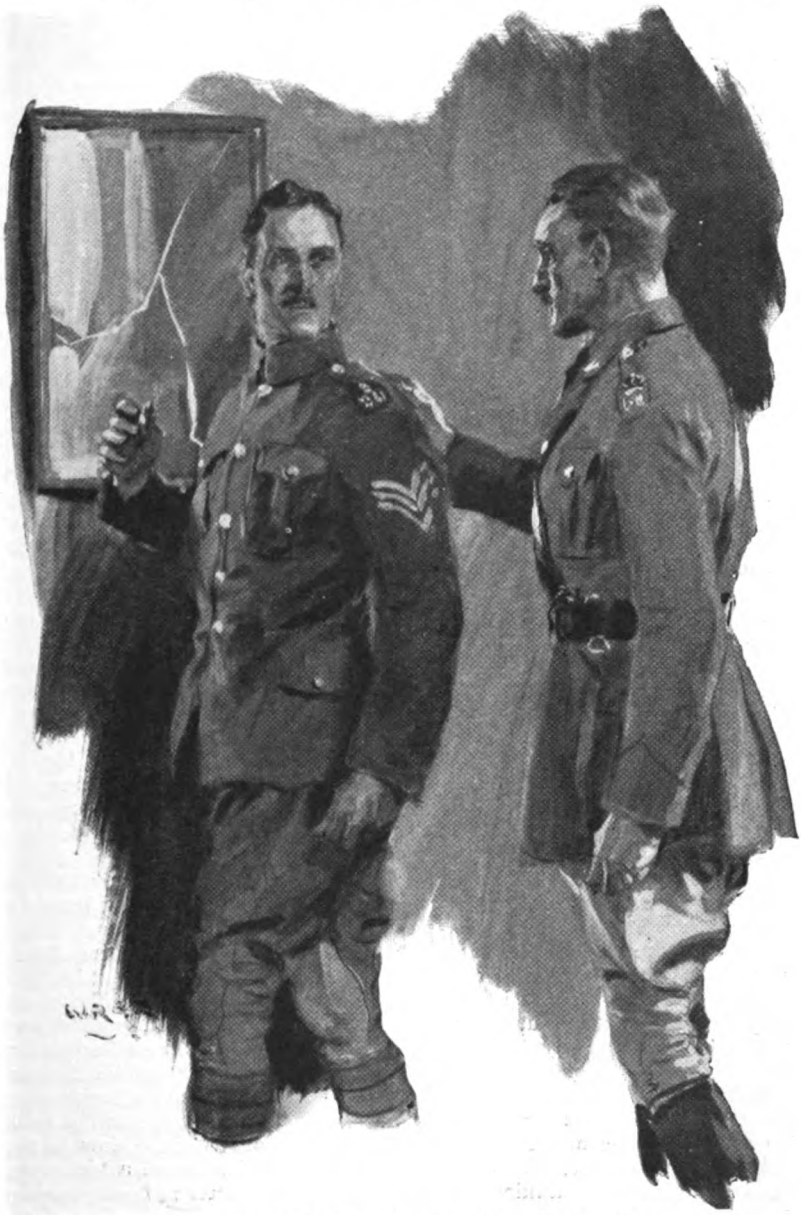
"As a cricketer," he said, "or as a man?"

"Both," I answered.

"Well, my candid opinion is that he learned his game at a first-class public school," he replied. "And I am further of the opinion, from the few words I spoke to him, that one would have expected to find him here and not in the Sergeants' Mess. What's his story? Do you know?"

"I don't." I shook my head. "Haven't an idea. But you've confirmed my own impressions."

And there I had to leave it for some months. Periodically I talked to Trevor, deliberately tried to trap him into some admission which would give me a clue to his past, but he was as wary as a fox and as close as an oyster. I don't know why I took the trouble—after all, it was his business entirely, but the fellow intrigued me. He was such an extraordinarily fine N.C.O., and there was never a sign of his hitting the bottle, which is the end of a good many gentlemen-rankers. Moreover, he didn't strike me as a fellow who had come a cropper, which is the usual cause of his kind.



"We stared at one another in silence. Squadron-leader and troop-sergeant had gone; we were just two men."

And then one day, when I least expected it, the problem began to solve itself. Philip Blenton rang me up in the morning after breakfast, from a house in the neighbourhood, where he was staying for a couple of two-day matches. Could I possibly spare Sergeant Trevor for the first of them? Against the I Z., who had brought down a snorting team, and Carter—the Oxford blue—had failed the local eleven at the last moment. If I couldn't they'd have to rake in one of the gardeners, but they weren't too strong as it was.

So I sent for Trevor, and asked him if

he'd care to play. I saw his eyes gleam for a moment; then he shook his head.

"I think not, thank you, sir," he said, quietly.

It's not quite like you to let Captain Blenton down, Trevor," I remarked. "He's relying on you."

I knew it was the right note to take with him, and I was very keen on his playing. I was going out myself that afternoon to watch, and I wanted to see him in different surroundings. We argued for a bit—I knew he was as keen as mustard in one way to play—and after a while he said he would. Then he went out of the office, and as it happened I followed him. There was an old cracked mirror in the passage outside, and as I opened the door he had just shut behind him, I had a glimpse of Sergeant Trevor examining his face in the glass. He'd got his hand so placed that it blotted out his moustache, and he seemed very intent on his reflection. Then he saw me, and for a moment or two we stared at one another in silence. Squadron-leader and troop-sergeant had gone; we were just two men, and the passage was empty. And I acted on a sudden impulse, and clapped him on the back.

"Don't be a fool, man," I cried. "Is there any reason why you shouldn't be recognized?"

"Nothing shady, Major," he answered, quietly. "But if one starts on a certain course, it's best to go through with it!"

At that moment the pay-sergeant appeared, and Trevor pulled himself together, saluted smartly, and was gone.

I suppose these things are planned out beforehand, went on the Soldier, thoughtfully. To call it all blind chance seems a well-nigh impossible solution to me. And yet the cynic would assuredly laugh at connecting a child eating an orange in a back street in Oxford, and the death while fishing in Ireland of one of the greatest-hearted men that ever lived. But unless that child had eaten that orange, and left the peel on the pavement for Carter, the Oxford blue, to slip on and sprain his ankle, the events I am going to relate would, in all probability, never have taken place. However, since delving too deeply into cause and effect inevitably produces insanity, I'd better get on with it.

I TURNED up about three o'clock at Crosby Hall, along with four or five other fellows from the regiment. Usual sort of stunt—marquee and lemonade, with whisky in the background for the hopeless cases. The I Z. merchants were in the field, and Trevor was batting. There was an Eton boy in with him, and the score was two hundred odd for five wickets. Philip Blenton lounged up as soon as he saw me, grinning all over his face.

"Thank heavens you let him come, old man! He's pulled eighty of the best out of his bag already, and doesn't look like getting out."

"He wouldn't come at first, Philip," I said, and he stared at me in surprise. "I think he was afraid of being recognized."

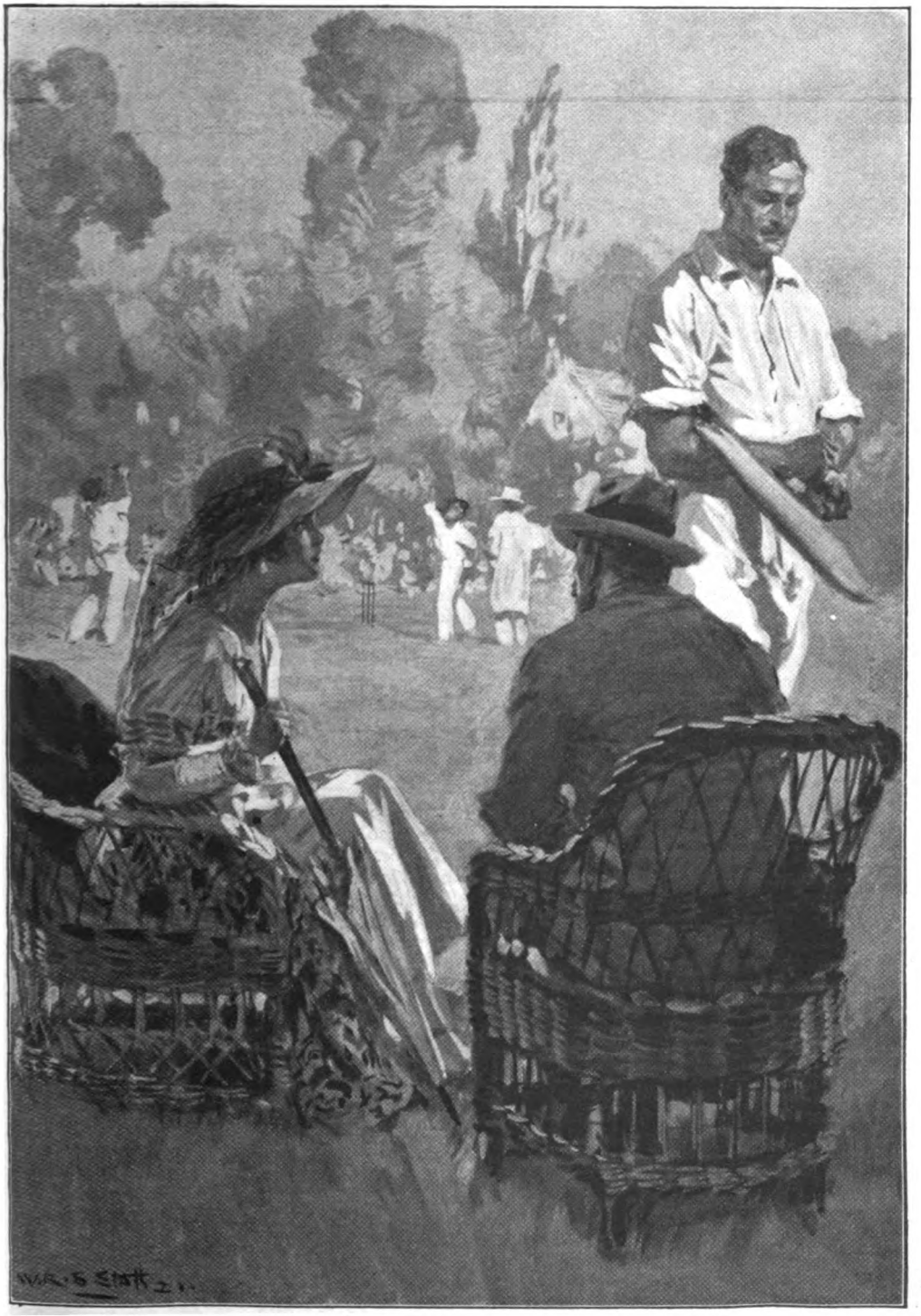
A burst of applause greeted a magnificent drive past cover-point, and for a while we watched the game in silence, until another long round of cheering announced that Sergeant Trevor had got his century. As I've said before, I'm no cricketer, but there was no need to be an expert to realize that he was something out of the way. He was treating the by-no-means-indifferent I Z. bowling with the utmost contempt, and old Lord Apson, our host, was beside himself with joy. He was a cricket maniac; his week was an annual fixture; and for the first time for many years he saw his team really putting it across the I Z. And it was just as I was basking in a little reflected glory that I saw a very dear old friend of mine arrive in the enclosure, accompanied by a perfectly charming girl.

"Why, Yeverley, old man!" I cried, "how are you?"

"Dog-face, as I live!" he shouted, seizing me by both hands. "Man-alive, I'm glad to see you. Let me introduce you to my wife; Doris, this is Major Chilham—otherwise Dog-face."

I shook hands with the girl, who was standing smiling beside him, and for a while we stopped there talking. He was fifteen years or so older than I, and had left the service as a Captain, but we both came from the same part of the country, and in days gone by I'd known him very well indeed. His marriage had taken place four years previously while I was abroad, and now, meeting his wife for the first time, I recalled bit by bit the gossip I'd heard in letters I got from home. How to everyone's amazement he'd married a girl young enough to be his daughter; how everybody had prophesied disaster, and affirmed that she was not half good enough for one of the elect like Giles Yeverley; how she'd been engaged to someone else and thrown him over. And yet as I looked at them both it struck me that the Jeremiahs had as usual been completely wrong: certainly nothing could exceed the dog-like devotion in Giles's eyes whenever he looked at his wife.

We strolled over to find some easy chairs, and he fussed round her as if she was an invalid. She took it quite naturally and calmly with a faint and charming smile, and when he finally bustled away to talk to



"'Major Chilham,' she said—and her voice was the tensest thing I've ever heard—'who is that man who has just come out?'"

Apson, leaving me alone with her, she was still smiling.

"You know Giles well?" she said.

"Awfully well," I answered. "And having now returned from my sojourn in the wilds, I hope I shall get to know his wife equally well."

"That's very nice of you, Dog-face"—she turned and looked at me—and, by Jove, she was pretty. "If you're anything like Giles—you must be a perfect dear."

Now I like that sort of a remark when it's made in the right way. It establishes a very pleasant footing at once, with no danger of misconstruction—like getting on good terms with a new horse the moment you put your feet in the irons, instead of messing around for half the hunt. Anyway, for the next ten minutes or so I didn't pay very much attention to the cricket. I gathered that there was one small son—Giles junior—who was the apple of his father's eye; and that at the moment a heavy love affair was in progress between the young gentleman aged three and the General's daughter, who was as much as four, and showed no shame over the matter whatever. Also that Giles and she were stopping with the General and his wife for a week or ten days.

AND it was at that stage of the proceedings that a prolonged burst of applause made us look at the cricket. Sergeant Trevor was apparently out—how I hadn't an idea—and was half-way between the wickets and the tent next to the one in which we were sitting, and which Apson always had erected for the local villagers and their friends. I saw them put up one hundred and twenty-five on the board as Trevor's score, and did my share in the clapping line.

"A fine player—that fellow," I said, following him with my eyes. "Don't know much about the game myself, but the experts tell me——" And at that moment I saw her face, and stopped abruptly. She had gone very white, and her knuckles were gleaming like the ivory on the handle of her parasol.

"Major Chilham," she said—and her voice was the tensest thing I've ever heard—"who is that man who has just come out?"

"Trevor is his name," I answered, quietly. "He's one of the troop-sergeants in my squadron." I was looking at her curiously, as the colour slowly came back to her face. "Why? Did you think you knew him?"

"He reminded me of someone I knew years ago," she said, sitting back in her chair. "But of course I must have been mistaken."

And then rather abruptly she changed the conversation, though every now and then she glanced towards the next tent, as if trying to see Trevor. And sitting beside her I realized that there was something pretty serious in the wind. She was on edge, though she was trying not to show it—and Trevor was the cause, or the man who called himself Trevor. All my curiosity came back, though I made no allusion to him; I was content to await further developments.

They weren't long in coming. The house team, with the respectable total of three hundred and fifty odd, were all out by tea-time, and both elevens foregathered in the tent behind. All, that is, except Trevor, who remained in the other until Apson himself went and pulled him out. I watched the old man, with his cheery smile, take Trevor by the elbow and literally drag him out of his chair; I watched Trevor in his blue undress jacket, smart as be damned, coming towards us with our host. And then very deliberately I looked at Giles Yeverley's wife. She was staring over my head at the two men; then she lowered her parasol.

"So you weren't mistaken after all, Mrs. Giles," I said, quietly.

"No, Dog-face, I wasn't," she answered. "Would you get hold of Giles for me, and tell him I'd like to get back. Say I'm not feeling very well."

I got up at once and went in search of her husband. I found him talking to the Zingari captain and Sergeant Trevor. He seemed quite excited, appealing as he spoke to the I Z. skipper, while Trevor stood by listening with a faint smile.

"What he says is quite right, Sergeant Trevor," remarked the Zingari man as I came up. "If you cared to consider it—you are absolutely up to the best county form. Of course, I don't know about your residential qualifications, but that can generally be fixed."

"Dog-face," cried Yeverley, as soon as he saw me, "he's in your squadron, isn't he? Well, it's so long since I left the Army that I've forgotten all about discipline—but I tell you here—right now in front of him—that Sergeant Trevor ought to chuck soldiering and take up professional cricket. Bimbo here agrees with me."

"Giles, you'll burst your waistcoat if you get so excited," I remarked, casually. "And, incidentally, Mrs. Yeverley wants to go home."

As I said the name I looked at Trevor, and my last doubt vanished. He gave a sudden start, which Giles, who had immediately torn off to his wife, didn't see, and proceeded to back into the farthest corner of the tea-tent. But once again old Apson frustrated him. Not for him the endless pauses and waits of first-class cricket; five minutes to roll the pitch and he was leading his team into the field. Trevor had to go from his

sanctuary, and there was only one exit from the enclosure in front of the tent.

They met—Mrs. Giles and Trevor—actually at that exit. By the irony of things, I think it was Giles who caused the meeting. He hurried forward as he saw Trevor going out, and caught him by the arm; dear old chap!—he was cricket mad if ever a man was. And so blissfully unconscious of the other, bigger thing going on right under his nose.

"Don't you forget what I said, Trevor," he said, earnestly. "Any county would be glad to have you. I'm going to talk to Major Chilham about it seriously."

And I doubt if Trevor heard a word. Over Giles's shoulder he was staring at Giles's wife—and she was staring back at him, while her breast rose and fell in little gasps, and it seemed to me that her lips were trembling. Then it was over; Trevor went out to field—Giles bustled back to his wife. And I, being a hopeless case, went in search of alcohol.

The Soldier paused to light another cigar.

HE carried out his threat, did Giles, with regard to me. Two or three days later I lunched with the General, and it seemed to me that we never got off the subject of Trevor. It wasn't only his opinion; had not Bimbo Lawrence, the I Z. captain, and one of the shrewdest judges of cricket in England, agreed with him? And so on without cessation about Trevor, the cricketer, while on the opposite side of the table, next to me, sat his wife, who could not get beyond Trevor, the man. Once or twice she glanced at me appealingly, as if to say: "For God's sake, stop him!"—but it was a task beyond my powers. I made one or two abortive attempts, and then I gave it up. The situation was beyond me; one could only let him ramble on and pray for the end of lunch.

And then he left the cricket and came to personalities.

"Know anything about him, Dog-face?" he asked. "Up at old Apson's place he struck me as being a gentleman. Anyway, he's a darned nice fellow. Wonder why he enlisted?"

"Oh, Giles, for goodness' sake, let's try another topic!" said his wife, suddenly. "We've had Sergeant Trevor since lunch began."

Poor old Giles looked at her in startled surprise, and she gave him a quick smile which robbed her words of their irritability. But I could see she was on the rack, and though I didn't know the real facts, it wasn't hard to make a shrewd guess as to the cause.

It was just before we rose from the table, I remember, that she said to me under the cover of the general conversation: "My God! Dog-face—it's not fair. It's damnable."

"Will you tell me?" I answered. "I might help."

"Perhaps I will some day," she said, quietly. "But you can't help; no one can do that. It was my fault all through, and the only thing that matters now is that Giles should never know."

I don't quite know why she suddenly confided in me, even to that extent. I suppose with her woman's intuition she realized that I'd guessed something, and it helps to get a thing off one's chest at times. Evidently it had been an unexpected meeting, and I cursed myself for having made him play. And yet how could one have foretold? It was just a continuation of the jig-saw started by that damned bit of orange peel. As she said, all that mattered was that Giles—dear old chap!—should never know.

The Soldier smiled a little sadly. So do the humans propose; but the God that moves the pieces frequently has different ideas. He did—that very afternoon. It was just as I was going that two white-faced nurses clutching two scared children appeared on the scene and babbled incoherently. And then the General's groom hove in sight—badly cut across the face and shaky at the knees—and from him we got the story.

They'd started off in the General's dog-cart to go to some children's party, and something had frightened the horse, which had promptly bolted. I knew the brute—a great raking black, though the groom, who was a first-class whip, generally had no difficulty in managing him. But on this occasion apparently he'd got clean away along the road into the town. He might have got the horse under control after a time, and then he'd have seen that the gates were closed at the railway crossing in front. And it was at that moment that a man—one of the sergeants from the barracks—had dashed out suddenly from the pavement and got to the horse's head. He was trampled on badly, but he hung on—and the horse had ceased to bolt when they crashed into the gates. The shafts were smashed, but nothing more. And the horse wasn't hurt. And they'd carried away the sergeant on an improvised stretcher. No; he hadn't spoken. He was unconscious.

"Which sergeant was it?" I asked, quietly—though I knew the answer before the groom gave it.

"Sergeant Trevor, sir," he said. "A squadron."

"Is he—is he badly hurt?" said the girl, and her face was ashen.

"I dunno, mum," answered the groom. "They took 'im off to the 'orspital, and I was busy with the 'orse."

"I'll ring up, if I may, General," I said, and he nodded.

I spoke to Purvis, the R.A.M.C. fellow, and his voice was very grave. They'd brought Trevor in still unconscious, and, though he wouldn't swear to it at the moment, he was afraid his back was broken. But he couldn't tell absolutely for certain until he came to. I hung up the receiver and found Mrs. Giles standing behind me. She said nothing—but just waited for me to speak.

"Purvis doesn't know for certain," I said, taking both her hands in mine. "But there's a possibility, my dear, that his back is broken."

She was a thoroughbred, that girl. She didn't make a fuss or cry out; she just looked me straight in the face and nodded her head once or twice.

"I must go to him, of course," she said, gravely. "Will you arrange it for me, please?"

"He's unconscious still," I told her.

"Then I must be beside him when he comes to," she answered. "Even if there was nothing else—he's saved my baby's life."

"I'll take you in my car," I said, when I saw that she was absolutely determined. "Leave it all to me."

"I must see him alone, Dog-face." She paused by the door, with her handkerchief rolled into a tight little ball in her hand. "I want to know that he's forgiven me."

"You shall see him alone if it's humanly possible," I answered gravely, and at that she was gone.

I DON'T quite know how I did it, but somehow or other I got her away from the General's house without Giles knowing. Giles junior was quite unhurt, and disposed to regard the entire thing as an entertainment got up especially for his benefit. And when she'd made sure of that, and kissed him passionately to his intense disgust, she slipped away with me in the car.

"You mustn't be disappointed," I warned her as we drove along, "if you can't see him alone. He may have been put into a ward with other men."

"Then they must put some screens round him," she whispered. "I must kiss him before—before——." She didn't complete the sentence; but it wasn't necessary.

We didn't speak again until I turned in at the gates of the hospital. And then I asked her a question which had been on the tip of my tongue a dozen times.

"Who is he—really?"

"Jimmy Dallas is his name," she answered, quietly. "We were engaged. And then his father lost all his money. He thought that was why—why I was beastly to him—but oh! Dog-face, it wasn't at all. I thought he was fond of another girl—and it was all a mistake. I found it out too late. And then Jimmy had disappeared—and I'd married Giles. Up at that cricket match was the first time I'd seen him since my wedding."

We drew up at the door, and I got out. It's the little tragedies, the little misunderstandings, that are so pitiful, and in all conscience this was a case in point. A boy and a girl—each too proud to explain, or ask for an explanation; and now the big tragedy. God! it seemed so futile.

I left her sitting in the car, and went in search of Purvis. I found him with Trevor—I still thought of him under that name—and he was conscious again. The doctor looked up as I tiptoed in, and shook his head at me warningly. So I waited, and after a while Purvis left the bed and drew me out into the passage.

"I'm not sure," he said. "He's so infernally bruised and messed about. His left arm is broken in two places, and three ribs—and I'm afraid his back as well. He seems so numb. But I can't be certain."

"Mrs. Yeverley is here," I said. "The mother of one of the kids he saved. She wants to see him."

"Out of the question," snapped Purvis. "I absolutely forbid it."

"But you mustn't forbid it, Doctor." We both swung round, to see the girl herself standing behind us. "I've got to see him. There are other reasons besides his having saved my baby's life."

"They must wait, Mrs. Yeverley," answered the Doctor. "In a case of this sort the only person I would allow to see him would be his wife."

"If I hadn't been a fool," she said deliberately, "I should have been his wife," and Purvis's jaw dropped.

Without another word she swept past him into the ward, and Purvis stood there gasping.

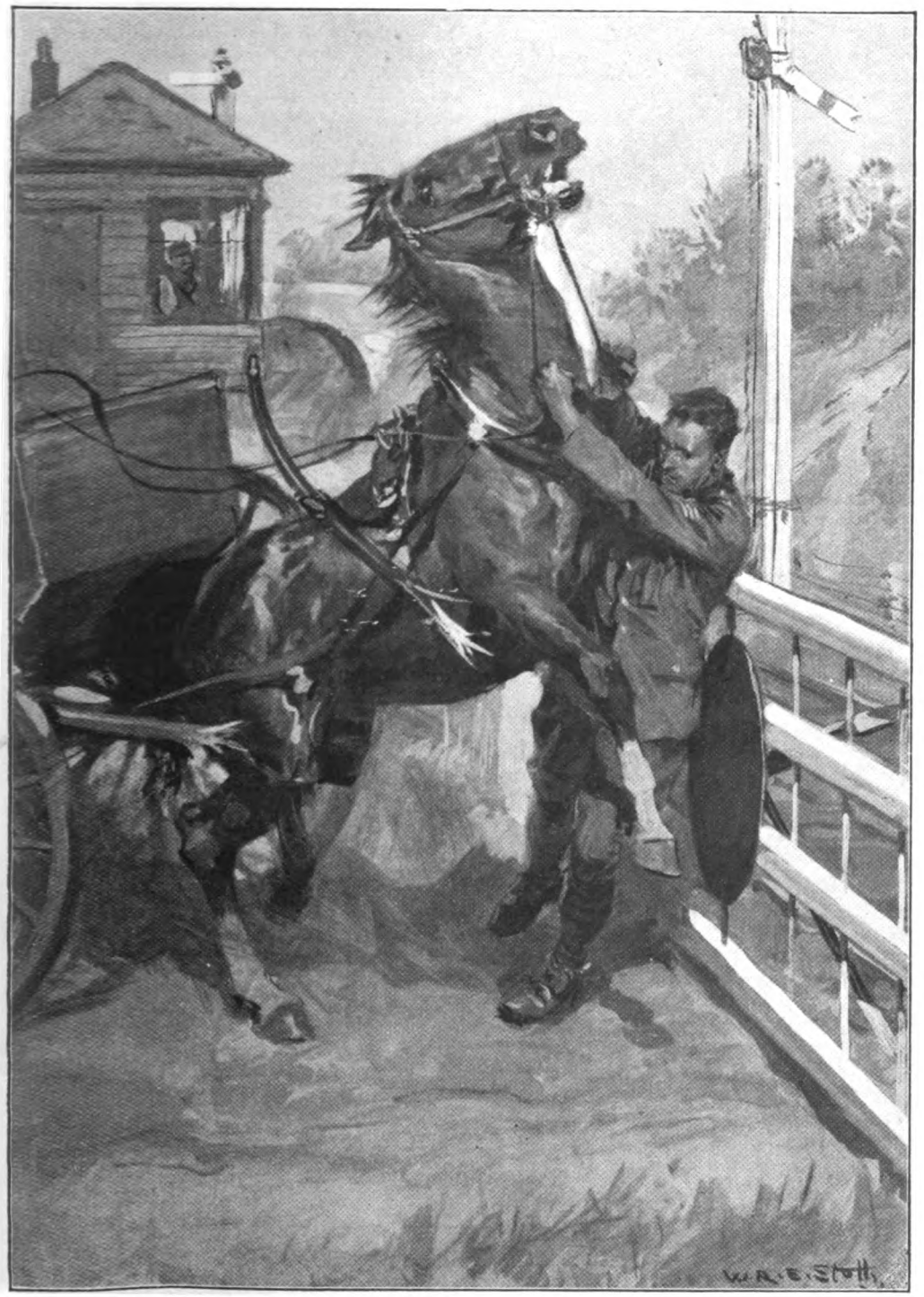
"Well, I'm damned!" he muttered, and I couldn't help smiling. It was rather a startling statement to come from a woman stopping with the G.O.C. about a sergeant in a cavalry regiment.

And then, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, came the final turn in the wheel. I was strolling up and down outside with Purvis, who was a sahib as well as a Doctor, and had asked no questions.

"If his back is broken it can't hurt him," he had remarked, "and if it isn't it will do him good."

At that we had left it, when suddenly, to my horror, I saw Giles himself going into the hospital.

"Good Lord, Doc!" I cried, sprinting after



"One of the sergeants from the barracks dashed out suddenly and got to the horse's head."

him, " that's her husband. And he doesn't know she's here."

But a lot can happen in a few seconds, and I was just a few seconds too late. As I got to the door I saw Giles in front of me—standing at the entrance to the ward as if he had been turned to stone. A big screen hid the bed from sight—but a screen is not sound proof. He looked at me as I came up, and involuntarily I stopped as I saw his face. And then quite clearly from the room beyond came his wife's voice.

" My darling, darling boy!—it's you and only you for ever and ever! "

I don't quite know how much Giles had guessed before. I think he knew about her previous engagement, but I'm quite sure he had never associated Trevor with it. A year or two later she told me that when she married him she had made no attempt to conceal the fact that she had loved another man—and loved him still. And Giles had taken her on those terms. But at the time I didn't know that: I only knew that a very dear friend's world had crashed about his head with stunning suddenness. It was Giles who pulled himself together first—Giles, with a face grey and lined, who said in a loud voice to me: " Well, Dog-face, where is the invalid?"

And then he waited a moment or two before he went round the screen.

" Ah! my dear," he said, quite steadily, as he saw his wife, " you here? "

He played his part for ten minutes, stiff-lipped and without a falter; then he went, and his wife went with him to continue the play in which they were billed for life. Trevor's back was not broken—in a couple of months he was back at duty. And so it might have continued for the duration, but for Giles being drowned fishing in Ireland.

The Soldier stared thoughtfully at the fire.

He was a first-class fisherman and a wonderful swimmer, was Giles Yeverley, and sometimes—I wonder. They say he got caught in a bore—that perhaps he got cramp. But, as I say, sometimes—I wonder.

I SAW them — Jimmy Dallas, sometime Sergeant Trevor, and his wife—at the Ritz two nights ago. They seemed wonderfully in love, though they'd been married ten years, and I stopped by their table.

" Sit down, Dog-face," she ordered, " and have a liqueur."

So I sat down and had a liqueur. And it was just as I was going that she looked at me with her wonderful smile, and said, very softly: " Thank God! dear old Giles never knew; and now, if he does, he'll understand."

The Soldier got up and stretched himself.

A big result for a bit of yellow peel.

Among the contents of

OUR CHRISTMAS NUMBER

will be:

Painting as a Pastime — **By WINSTON CHURCHILL**
(With many colour reproductions of his paintings)

The Nightmare Room — **By A. CONAN DOYLE**

A new story of the inimitable Jeeves — **By P. G. WODEHOUSE**

The first of a new type of detective story — **By E. P. OPPENHEIM**

as well as contributions by "SAPPER," EDGAR WALLACE, F. BRITTEN AUSTIN, CARUSO, A. B. WALKLEY, etc., etc.

The CHRISTMAS "STRAND" Ready 25th Nov.

SIR HENRY WOOD

by

DOCTOR ETHEL SMYTH

Doctor Ethel Smyth, the well-known musician and Author of "Impressions That Remained" and "Streaks of Life," here gives a delightful character-study of a fellow-musician.

THE first duty of one who writes about Sir Henry Wood is to break gently to the public the fact that he is a kind of monster; for how else shall we describe a great conductor devoid of pose—a public man who, although one of the greatest educative influences in the country, gives himself no airs—a richly equipped musician who nevertheless is an absolutely normal human being?

These are points of such absorbing interest that the present chronicler finds it hard to pull her attention round to biographical facts such as the occasion demands. But they shall be dealt with, though in a state of high compression.

His father, friend and pupil of John Hullah, sang for thirty years in the choir at St. Sepulchre's, Holborn, and, like his son, taught singing. Sir Henry remembers his pointing out to him another friend, Sir John Goss. "Look at him well," he said; "there's a man whose teacher, Attwood, had shaken hands with Mozart!" Yet, in spite of this ready-made link with music, young Henry's vocation was a debatable point, his talent for drawing and painting being as marked as his musical gift; the necessity of earning a livelihood, however, eventually weighted the balance in favour of music.

Sir Henry Wood when a boy.

For seven years he studied under Ebenezer Prout, and after that put in six terms at the Royal Academy of Music. Once when I was talking about the escapades of Leipzig Conservatoirists he spoke of his organ teacher, Dr. Steggall, whose endearing habit of partaking of

refreshment during the classes is explained by the fact that they began at 8.30 a.m. And no sooner did he make for the table in the next room, on which the maid had just deposited sherry and sandwiches, than the pupil at the organ would pull out the 16-foot trombone pedal-stop, whereupon the Doctor would rush back to expostulate at the hideous din while the other pupils drank the sherry. Evidently the only difference between England and Germany is that at Leipzig it would have been beer—or perhaps Schnapps.

His education finished, for some years Wood conducted opera in the provinces, and it was shortly after the failure of Signor Lago's opera season that his old fellow-student at the Academy, Robert Newman, the first manager of the Queen's Hall, conceived the idea of Promenade Concerts and offered him the post of conductor, should the scheme materialize. It did, thanks to a friend of one of Wood's pupils, who, while attending a singing class as listener, heard the matter being discussed, and instantly offered to bank five thousand pounds for Mr. Newman. He lost two thousand three hundred pounds of it on the first season, but the concerts soon became a financial success, and continued so for many years. Since about 1910, for various reasons, including the enormous charges all round, and the absorption by the cinema of orchestral players, it has become manifest that symphony concerts will in all probability never pay again; not in London, anyhow, where I am told four million people go to the theatre and only ten thousand to concerts. And the proportion is probably the same everywhere in England.

The Promenade Concerts are the most important factor in our musical life of to-day, and to put them through year after year is a *tour de force* of which I verily believe no man but Henry Wood would be capable. Think of the programme construction alone—ten weeks of nightly concerts in which no item appears twice, and in which every class of good music, ancient or modern, home-grown or foreign, finds a place! Four mornings in the week are devoted to rehearsing for six weekday and two Sunday concerts; *there is even a certain week in September in which there are nine concerts and six rehearsals!* And meanwhile scores have to be studied, and the band to be kept going and conducted with spirit. . . . Spirit? How can flesh and blood stand it? And towards the close of the season a certain type of critic will not fail to point out that band and conductor are falling off! To the honour of the fraternity be it said this type is rare, and luckily only one or two very rich and expensive journals can adequately remunerate such excessive culture and discrimination.

After the Proms are finished the usual strenuous music season sets in, and besides his work in London there are few big provincial musical enterprises in which Sir Henry is not involved; not to speak of the twenty-four Brand Lane concerts in Manchester which he conducts. These concerts are his great delight, though they involve his passing every other week-end, from mid-October to May, in the following delectable manner:—

Saturday (in Manchester), rehearsal 1.30. Another rehearsal 5.30. Concert 7.30. (Interval in the midnight train.) *Sunday* (in London), first concert at 3.30; second concert at 7; and thanks to the British constitution he is still alive on Monday!

IT has always been considered the mark of the perfect horseman to be doing nothing, apparently, but sit still, and in the past all great conductors rode their orchestras on these lines; Richter and Mottl, for instance, and Mahler—the greatest of them all, I think. Half the time Mahler seemed to be hardly "conducting" at all, though his men could tell tales of the terrifically strong, flexible grip in which they were held. But later conductors, inspired perhaps by Sousa, are kind enough to let the audience amply into the secret of how it is done; a deadly stab with the baton, a twittering of the left-hand fingers, as though to shake them free from dewdrops, a leap here, a crouch there, a tiptoe rounding of the left calf . . . oh! there is no end to these diverting antics, which electrify the audience (in whose sole honour, of course, they are performed), and after all do not greatly upset the players. "Have you seen (*sic*) So-and-so conduct?" admirers ask; "he is too wonderful!"

He is indeed. Yet this important part of a conductor's activities is wholly neglected by that strange man, Sir Henry. When he takes up the baton his only preoccupation is to get such results out of the orchestra as circumstances permit; his gestures are nothing but carefully thought-out means to that end, and if even he will "crouch" sometimes, it is because when rehearsals have to be scamped the players may easily overrun a *pp subito*. Foolhardy, perhaps, thus to reject all adventitious appeals to an audience's imagination . . . but he is like that.

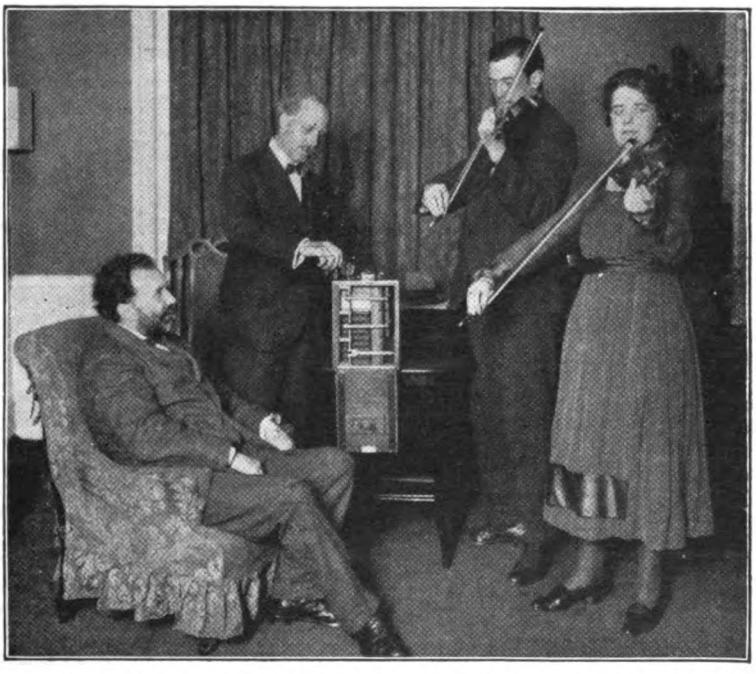
About self-advertisement he is equally hopeless. Months before the event you learn that So-and-so is off to San Francisco, or Kamchatka, or even Little Peddlington, to conduct, and one may be thankful that enough is left of this popular conductor to twitter a finger or "make a leg," as our forefathers called it, in his own country, so violently are foreign capitals fighting for

possession of his person. You never see "pars" of this kind about Sir Henry, though he is constantly invited to cross the water, and though every concert enterprise in England can enumerate the qualities that make his supreme value in our music life: his thoroughness, for instance, his quickness, his right judgment, his knowledge of human nature, which includes sense of humour and makes both for indulgence and authority. No one exploits as he does the last ounce of a possibility, whether in foreseeing and forestalling hitches or in making good when, in spite of all, they happen. I have learned more about certain aspects of his life from his wife than from himself—that wife without whom, as so frequently happens, he could not get through half the work he shoulders, and would have been dead of worry and fatigue long ago—and I must just mention a special trait of his in a given situation that, as well I know, will always be with us.

Musical enterprises in the provinces are generally run by enthusiastic amateurs, and sometimes the organization leaves much to be desired. Hence it happens that on your arrival at three o'clock to rehearse, it is discovered that the harp part, or the fourth horn, has unfortunately been sent to London with the last concert's music. Most conductors shrug their shoulders and, knowing that "it never will be missed," do without that harp or horn. But Sir Henry sets to work after the rehearsal to write out the part himself, and if possible goes through it with the performer immediately before the concert. And the point is that he would act similarly whether it is a question of a small town where he is conducting for a nominal fee, or a big occasion.

But the most perfect monument to his thoroughness is a small box that when required emits a continuous "a," before which the players pass in single file on their way to the Queen's Hall platform, in order to possess themselves of the true pitch. The evolution of this apparatus, child of one of his main passions, applied science, was a long business, and fragments of the story as told by him dance in my brain. Sir James Dewar, the Cambridge Scientific Society, and thirty-five pounds came in, I think, during the first stage, but the resultant electric tuning-fork declined to go on sounding for the requisite thirty minutes. In the next stage there were visits to, or reports from, two foreign exhibitions; also "no mercury contact," though I cannot recall if this was a misfortune or a blessing. Anyhow, this fork "fitted any switch," and was used for some time, but as it cost only a hundred and five marks, as against thirty-five pounds, the least it could do was perpetually to get out of order. Then Sir Henry and a lady, daughter of Dr. Stone, the acoustician, got to work on organ-pipe lines, and the wholly successful result is a tiny wind-chest with three little bellows which relieve each other when out of breath, and a reed made of German silver—a metal impervious to climatic variations which surely ought to have been evolved in England. This machine is worked by a handle, and after six years the "a" is not one vibration out.

The twenty minutes' procession before that box, man after man dominated by its soft persistent voice, is, to my mind, a strangely impressive sight—ritualistic, almost sacrificial,



Sir Henry Wood with his invention—a wind-chest with a silver reed which gives the true pitch to every player in the orchestra.

and reminiscent, somehow, of the Elgin Marbles Frieze! But the system finds no imitators, for if it is not to be a farce the conductor must be on the spot, like a general at a review, half an hour before the battle begins. Only a man of this stamp could ask what he does of his orchestra, and get it.

YET some orchestral players were slow to forgive him the action which led to the foundation of the London Symphony Orchestra. Naturally, for it broke up a ring. The deputy system had become a scandal; you rehearsed with the great flautist A., who according to the signed roster was also present at the concert; but evidently only in spirit, for as a matter of fact he was performing elsewhere for a larger fee, and the signer was his friend Walker. There were only about seventy-five first-class players in all England to go round: these kept the rest out, and during the provincial festivals the Queen's Hall Orchestra consisted mainly of deputies. At last Sir Henry put his foot down and a split ensued. Outside his ranks the evil went on for some time, and on one memorable occasion a certain London band, if advertisements could be believed, beat the record of the famous bird by performing in three places at once. But eventually all decent orchestras came into line; the young fellows had a chance at last, and the result is that where twenty years ago you had one first-class trumpeter, you now have forty.

In all things he takes his own line. Until quite recently he never published his views as to the value of women in an orchestra, whether as executants with specific attributes or as morale-raising influence; but ages before the question became a burning one he had absorbed them into his band in the name of that common sense and fairness which inspires all his actions. "If," he argued, "half the best violin players at the musical colleges are women, on what decent ground can they be excluded from orchestras?" Whereupon candidates of both sexes were invited to compete for his vacant desks, and that is his principle to-day.

To follow the workings of the same spirit on another field, examination of his programmes in past years would prove that long before this or that conductor was claiming, not without justification, to be the British composer's friend and also the pioneer of foreign genius, Sir Henry had been quietly producing English works and alien novelties. This is his way. Jealous of none, emulous of no other conductor, though the first to admire and extol good work where he sees it, he makes no professions, pegs out no claims, but simply produces a work either because it interests him or because he thinks it should be heard. The other day when writing a monograph on Augusta Holmes I asked him if he had ever come across any of her work. "Why," he answered, "I once produced a symphonic poem of hers called 'Irlande,'" adding that it was first-rate and finely scored. That must have been more than twenty years ago, and I wonder who but he would have had the curiosity in those days to examine a woman's work, let alone the courage—or shall we say the energy—to brush aside prejudice and perform it? Last year he produced Dorothy Howell's symphonic poem "Lamia," with such success that one not unnaturally expected to see various conductors tumbling over each other to give their reading of what was evidently a remarkable work. Strange to say, nothing of the sort happened; but if you look in the Promenade programmes for the present season, there you will find "Lamia"! And now that women are emerging from the spiritual harem and purchasing score paper (at about a shilling a sheet), it is to him they will take it at a later stage, certain that if what is written there deserves a hearing he will do his best for them.

Rigorous upholders of that convenient mental attitude the *parti-pris* must try to make allowances! It is not that he refuses to bow the knee to prejudice, it is simply that it does not exist for him, and that he is fatally predisposed to give everyone a chance, having by nature as wide an outlook as anyone I have known.

The roots of this quality spring, I think, as a rule from both heart and head. Certainly it is so in the case of Henry Wood, who reminds one of a Renaissance figure—of the days when men were not forced by competition into rigid specialism, but could afford to be all-round, highly-equipped human beings. Leonardo is the instance that occurs most readily to the mind; another is Rubens, painter and Flemish Ambassador; or Goethe, literary genius, architect, courtier, statesman, and biologist. Of their company is this terrifically burdened man—this Power, as I always think of him—who among other things is a member of the Royal Institution; who finds time to keep abreast of all new departures in astronomy and most other sciences, and pores over books like Scripture's "Experimental Phonetics"; who, from sheer interest in Einstein's theories, actually attended his lectures, though he has no German, and declares one can deduce the lecturer's greatness from his face and manner alone. During his short holiday, during stray week-ends snatched from a whirl of work, his chief passion would seem to be the painting of strong, original landscapes; that, and carpentering, as witness the paling, floors, doors, and walls of the old farmhouse the Woods bought at Chorley-

wood, one of the huge adjoining barns of which has been turned into a studio in spite of the rats. In fact, I should think there was not a keener, less *blasé* intelligence, a kindlier, more genial nature than his in this war-wearied world; small wonder that when he enters a room someone seems to have switched on a fresh set of lights, and that under his handling even not very vital music becomes alive.

But to the present writer the supreme point of his conducting is that he never puts himself between you and the music. His reading, though once in a way you may not see eye to eye with him, is always an honest endeavour to bring out the composer's intention, not to show off Wood. And this, given his profound musical culture and the born conductor's mastery of his material, is the reason why his conducting is never fatiguing, stale, or tricky. It is what Shakespeare's *Audrey*, if musical, would confidently have described as "a true thing."

One word more. A friend of Mr. Lloyd George's once informed the present writer that until you have seen him at home—a husband devoted to, amused by, and delighting in his wife, a father who really enjoys the company of his children, a companion whom no uninformed person would suspect bears an almost fantastic weight on his shoulders—until you have seen these things you cannot judge how remarkable, because how *normal*, a man he is. This is the best thing I have ever heard about our present Prime Minister, and if I repeat it here, it is because every word of it applies equally to the subject of this article.

He himself is so utterly simple, so free from vanity, so incapable of blowing his own trumpet, that in writing about him one might well be tempted, by way of adjusting the balance, to put forth a blast suitable for wakening the dead, but not quite so seemly in the case of the living. I have resisted this temptation as far as was compatible with telling the truth, and in conclusion am prepared to issue a challenge. Ask anyone who knows him well whether what I have written does not err, if anything, on the side of under-statement.

I have no doubt whatever that such a one will emphatically answer, "Yes."

ONE OF SIR HENRY WOOD'S PAINTINGS.

"During his short holiday and stray week-ends, his chief passion would seem to be the painting of strong, original landscapes."

THE FIT-UP

by

GILBERT FRANKAU

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

I.

THE business of the drama being to create illusion for the public, it follows as a consequence that the dramatist must rid himself of all private illusions—learning to survey his dramas, and more especially the actors and actresses who portray them to the public, from a standpoint of the coldest, most critical, most businesslike detachment. This, the most heartbreaking of all the heartbreaking lessons to be acquired by those whose literary star guides them to "the boards," is not learned lightly; because, in the theatrical profession, truth hides at the bottom of a very deep well, and he who drags truth up to the light of day reaps the usual reward of the prophet—stoning. Which may or may not be the reason why no novelist has so far succeeded in writing a true story of the British stage!

II.

AS his artistic fingers steered the two-seater carefully out of London, John Hapgood, author of five reputedly successful comedies—in three of which he had himself taken a financial share—damned, under his big moustache, the entire British stage, and more particularly that shining light thereof, Miss Hélène Dalby. For Miss Hélène Dalby, and Miss Hélène Dalby's husband, the egregious Hugh Leesthorpe, had persuaded John Hapgood to write a play for them—and now the play was within three weeks of production. That morning, in fact, had seen its fourth rehearsal.

"Hopeless!" muttered John Hapgood, nipping between a tram and a lamp-post. "Hopeless! The woman can't act, never could act, and never will be able to act."

He visualized Hélène Dalby, not as "the public" might possibly be brought to see her, but as she actually was: a woman of three-and-thirty, with the pretty peaky face, the mean bust, and the thin arms which still enabled her to masquerade in "girl-parts"; visualized the huge in-turned feet, which not even the most expert shoemaker could camouflage, the ungainly hips, the little tricks with which Hélène (and Hélène's husband) had temporarily succeeded in duping the easily-pleased war-time audiences of London that Hélène Dalby was an actress.

"Saxby must have been crazy," thought John Hapgood. For the business had been arranged by Monty Saxby, Hapgood's agent, during the dramatist's absence in America. "I showed your scenario to Leesthorpe," wrote Saxby, "and he feels that, with certain alterations, the leading part would be ideal for his wife. Of course, they're new to management, but from all I hear she has one or two fairly good people willing to back her." And Hapgood, in a weak moment, yielded.

"My fault," he ruminated, "not Saxby's. The playwright who leaves things to his agent is an ass."

And John Hapgood drove on, his suit-case rattling in the dicky behind, out of London into Chalkshire. Till Tuesday, he would forget Hélène Dalby, and Hélène Dalby's husband, and Saxby, and all the inevitable catastrophes of rehearsal-time.

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Perhaps he misjudged Hélène Dalby; perhaps, after all, she could act. If she couldn't, of course, the play, his best play, was doomed.

But somehow the big, brown-eyed, brown-haired man in the dark blue car (except for his artistic fingers you would never have judged John Hapgood an artist; he looked more like a gentleman-farmer than a playwright) could not throw off his annoyances. The Dalby woman could *not* act. He, John Hapgood, had known that the very first moment he saw her tread the boards on his return from the States. He remembered her muffed entrance, her shrill voice; remembered saying to himself, "Saxby's made a bloomer."

She had been playing Marian Delorme in "Marian's Husband." A poor part? Quite! But that was no reason why she should play it poorly; why she should have only two tones, the shrill and the sob, in her voice. The play had been a big success? Admitted! But the success had not been achieved by Hélène Dalby. Stephen Bannock, the juvenile, had made that play—though Hélène Dalby took the credit for it.

"She would!" thought the dramatist, grimly; and visualized once again the pretty peaky face, the light eyebrows, the foxy eyes, the chin which even Hélène's set smile could not disguise. A prize-fighter's chin! A regular virago's chin! A chin to make one sorry even for Hugh Leesthorpe.

Not that one could be really sorry for Hugh Leesthorpe, for the unsuccessful actor with the yellow-irised shifty eyes, the gingerbread complexion, and the constantly-twitching jowl, who now—under the pretence of being a manager—proposed to live on his wife's earnings or her backers' capital.

"Faugh!" said John Hapgood, dramatist—and pulled temper suddenly to a standstill. "I'm letting my personal dislike of them get the better of me," he thought. "Mustn't do that. Must stick to the business. What's the use of fretting? If she can't act, we must try and make her act. If the play fails, it fails."

All the same, as he drove under a crimson winter twilight up the long main street of Chalkton to the Chalkshire Arms, John Hapgood knew that if "The Young Lady in Mauve" failed, the failure would break what little of John Hapgood's artistic heart still remained unbroken. In addition to which, Mrs. John Hapgood—— But Mrs. John Hapgood does not appear till the last act.

III.

GARAGING his car in the old-time posting-stables of "the Arms," the playwright momentarily forgot his troubles. Already solitude—that desire to be alone which had driven him from an understanding wife into a county other than his own (he was, as the finish of the story shows, no Londoner)—had worked its cure. Dressing for dinner before the wood fire in the dark oak-wainscoted bedroom, Hélène Dalby, and all that Hélène Dalby stood for, seemed like phantoms out of another life. The "theatre"—thank the Lord!—had not yet invaded Chalkton. Chalkton, with its one long street and its three thousand inhabitants, barely supported one picture-house.

But the illusion of a theatreless Chalkton dispelled itself even before the dramatist, a trifle self-conscious in his evening-kit, sat down to his lonely meal—Dolly, the waitress, informing him, with a knowing movement of her flaxen head: "Great doings since you was last here, sir. Turned the Assembly Rooms into a playhouse, they have. Real live actors and actresses, too. None of your pictures. Not that Chalkton takes to it much, I will say."

And that, needless to add, spoiled the dramatist's dinner. He had intended to eat slowly, to linger over his port, watching the cigar-smoke spiral lazily to the black rafters, quizzing the other diners, quizzing the prints on the red-papered walls. He had intended removing himself to the bar for a final whisky, for a chat with his friend the landlord. Instead, he hurried through his meal, hurried over his wine, hurried—as the old battery horse unable to stray long from the picket-lines—to the Assembly Rooms.

Hurrying, his troubles came back to him. The "theatre" was a curse—a curse! Once a man got bitten with it he could think of nothing else. Damn the "theatre"—the "theatre" was only fit for—Hélène Dalbys.

Outside the Assembly Rooms only one light gleamed faintly on one blurred poster. "Marian's Husband," read Hapgood. "The greatest success ever produced in London." He hesitated—thinking once more of the Dalby woman. Then, feeling utterly foolish, he went in.

"They're almost through the first act," grumbled the improvised attendant in the improvised box-office. "Stalls is two shillings."

Hapgood paid his money and walked slowly up the staircase. At top of it, an undersized fellow in shabby evening-clothes took his ticket.

"Are you running this show?" asked the dramatist.

"Yes—bad luck to it!" groused the manager. "I run all the shows here. And a fat lot of good I'm doing myself!"

"Business not up to much, eh?"

"Business!" The other sniffed. "You can't do business in this dead-and-alive place. All that Chalkton wants is sixpennorth of

pictures. Ruined myself, that's what I've done—trying to introduce Art into this one-horse village. Art!" The voice rose. "That's what I've given 'em. Two good shows a week. Best I could get from London. You go in and see."

A tiny rattle of applause, more heart-breaking than the deadest silence, interrupted the monologue; and a minute later John Hapgood passed through the baized door into the "auditorium."

Once upon a time, way back in the eighteen-sixties, the Chalkton Assembly Rooms had been the smartest dance-hall in Chalkshire. Hunt balls had been given there, and "routs"; wedding breakfasts even. Once, wax candles had gleamed from the tarnished sconces, and fiddlers plunked it merrily on the dais while men in gay coats whirled crinolined beauties across the polished floor. Now the place was a "fit-up" theatre—its curtain lowered, its benches almost empty, a tumbledown piano wheezing the *entr'acte* rag-time. The dramatist took a penny programme from the piano-man, and a seat in the second row. Idly he scrutinized the programme: "*Marian Delorme:* Miss Moira Mitchell. *Herbert Delorme:* Mr. Guy Danby."

The rag-time ceased, the two electric "house-lights" were turned off, and the curtain—after a preliminary shiver—rose on "A Drawing-room at the Delormes'."

For the first two minutes (it had been ten in London, but the comedy had suffered excision ere it went "on tour") John Hapgood listened pityingly. It was all so inconceivably bad, so inconceivably pathetic—the poor stage, the poor furniture, the ill-hung back-cloth, the two young men in the badly-cut clothes mouthing the badly "cut" lines under the badly manipulated "lime."

"But where *is* Marian?" ejaculated Herbert Delorme's "friend" on the stage.

"She should be here *at any moment*," emphasized Mr. Guy Danby, with a sidelong glance at the wings.

John Hapgood yawned at the obviousness of the cue. Then he forgot to yawn, forgot the poverty and the pathos of the scene in a gasp of sheer amazement. For the girl who entered to Danby's cue was that rarity of rarities, *an actress*.

An actress! No doubt about that. From the first moment he set eyes on Moira, the dramatist *knew*. Why, even the scant rustic audience seemed aware, vaguely, of the miracle. The poor stage, the poor scenery, the two masculine puppets, were transformed. The illusion became, for ten breathless seconds, reality.

Yet, so far, Moira had not spoken! She had only "entered," as the true actress enters, quietly, holding stage and audience by the magic of a trained personality. Then she began to speak, and Hapgood realized her full beauty—the dark hair, the dark emotional eyes, the expressive hands, the voice, and the presence of her. If only Hélène Dalby had that magic, that training, that peculiar power of pouring, not herself but the character she played, in warm emotion across the footlights!

All through that second act, and all through the final one, regretful only that he should have missed the Marian Delorme of Act I., John Hapgood sat enthralled, revelling—every keyed-up sense of him—in illusion made perfect.

IV.

OFF the stage—he found her, through the manager's reluctant good offices, putting on an undistinguished hat by the aid of a cracked mirror—Moira was an ordinary good-looking person of twenty-five, very weary (Hapgood, who knew the game, expected weariness), very much on her guard, very loath in conversation, very anxious about the cheap suit-case she had obviously just finished packing.

"You might have sent in *some* name," she said. "I believe, in the provinces, that a false one is the usual thing."

The dramatist laughed. "You're tired, Miss Mitchell. I don't wonder. Marian Delorme is a tiring part—when it's well played. And you played it, if I may be allowed to say so, perfectly."

"You're in the profession, then?" Her dark eyes grew friendlier.

"Not exactly. I'm a dramatist."

"Oh!" She scrutinized his evening-clothes. "A successful one, I hope?"

"Moderately. Hapgood's the name. You may have heard it."

"John Hapgood!" She named his five plays. 'And there's a new one, 'The Young Lady in Mauve.' Hélène Dalby's doing it, isn't she? I wrote to her about minor parts, but, of course, she didn't answer. Why should she? I've never been on in London."

Again the dramatist laughed. "Did you ever see Hélène Dalby play Marian Delorme, Miss Mitchell?"

"No."

"Or any other part?"

"No."

"If you had, you wouldn't have troubled to have written."

"Why not?" She looked at him, puzzled.

"Because," said John Hapgood, "ladies in Hélène Dalby's position are not exactly anxious to give other ladies a chance."

"But that's a dreadful thing to say." The artist in Moira winced. "Dreadful. Surely, if people love the theatre, all that they think of——"

"'You might have sent in *some* name,' she said. 'I believe, in the provinces, that a false one is the usual thing.'"

" Is keeping their own jobs in it," said John Hapgood, bitterly. And that night, walking the girl back to her lodgings, he opened his heart as he had never before opened it to a soul in that dark, backbiting world which is theatreland.

" All the same," she told him at parting, " I don't believe it. Good work counts in the end."

" Not unless the public gets a chance of seeing it." The man raised his hat. " You're off to-morrow, I suppose. Where to ? "

" Nowhere in particular." The girl in the doorway smiled bravely. " London, I suppose. Thank goodness it's a cheap fare ! "

" You mean ? "

" Oh, the usual thing ! No money for salaries."

But Moira Mitchell did not pay her own fare back to London. She went—she and her cheap suit-case, with the cheap manicure-set and the cheap make-up box—in John Hapgood's dark blue two-seater ; wondering vaguely whether the man at the wheel could carry out his promise of an " understudy."

V.

TO John Hapgood, Tuesday's rehearsal of Hélène Dalby's big scene in " The Young Lady in Mauve " was the last word in artistic horror. He sat in the front row of the empty dress-circle—Hugh Leesthorpe at his side. Below them, in the stalls, sat the producer. From the stage sounded Hélène's voice—sob and scream, scream and sob.

Listening, the dramatist watched her, as a man might watch his own funeral ; watched the meaningless gestures, the unchanging face, the soulless eyes.

" Great, isn't she ? " whispered Leesthorpe.

The scene ended ; the producer, making his way on stage, began a low-voiced conversation with Hélène and the young actor who partnered her emotions. Hapgood's mind wandered, concentrated.

" About your wife's understudy," he began. " Is she better ? "

" No. I'm afraid we shall have to get someone else." Leesthorpe lit himself a cigarette. As he did so, Hapgood marked the unsteady fingers, the twitching jowl ; and became suddenly aware that the fellow looked queasy. The queasiness grew more apparent as Leesthorpe went on : " By the way, old man, I've been wondering if you could come up to the office for a minute or two. There's a bit of—er—business I'd like to discuss with you."

" Can't Saxby settle it ? "

" No. At least, I don't think so. The fact is—er—I'd rather Saxby—— You know what I mean. These agents, they don't really understand the theatre. Whereas you——"

As they made their way out of the dress-circle, they passed Moira. She bowed, offering her hand with a shy, " You told me to be here at twelve."

Hapgood introduced Leesthorpe. " Miss Mitchell is a friend of mine. Perhaps you'll see her after we've had our talk."

" Of course." Leesthorpe fidgeted uneasily. " Of course—if Miss Mitchell is a friend of yours. Anything we can do. . . . Perhaps Miss Mitchell could come back after lunch."

He arranged the appointment ; and Moira disappeared. Hapgood, following his man up the uncarpeted stairs to one of the dressing-rooms which Leesthorpe used as his office, knew perfectly well that—unless the point were pressed home — Moira's appointment would not be kept.

" Well ? " he queried, straddling a chair. " What's the trouble, Leesthorpe ? "

Hélène Dalby's husband hesitated, plunged in.

" This," he managed, fumbling in his breast-pocket, and extracting a sheet of crumpled paper. " You'd better read it for yourself. I'm sure *I* don't know what to do. After all the trouble we've had, too."

John Hapgood took the proffered letter, and read slowly :—

" Dear Leesthorpe,—I'm afraid it's off about that two thousand. Fearfully sorry. Unexpected losses. Hope it won't put you in a hole. I thought, up to the last moment, that I could manage it as promised."

Through the dramatist's imaginative mind, as he scrutinized the letter, flashed the unspoken thought, " He wants *me* to put up the money ! *Me !* That's why he was praising his wife's acting all through rehearsal." Aloud, he said :—

" I suppose you can find the money somewhere else ? "

" But we can't." Leesthorpe's voice shook. " We can't. You know how tight things are everywhere."

There intervened an uncomfortable silence, broken by Hapgood's astonished : " But surely it's very unusual to take your theatre *before* you're certain of your syndicate."

Leesthorpe started in to explain. They'd had two thousand five hundred, enough to pay the advance rent, to pay for the dresses, the producer. The missing two thousand had been promised, definitely promised. In writing ? Well, no—not exactly in writing. But still, he — Leesthorpe — had never imagined—— Who could have imagined ?

" That's all very well," interrupted the dramatist, grimly, " but what about my play ? You've contracted with me to produce it."

"We've done our best." Leesthorpe's eyes grew sullen. "You've got no claim against us. So long as the curtain goes up on the first night——"

"And your company? What about them?"

"Oh!"—airily—"they'll be all right. Our accountant says that, if the worst comes to the worst, we'll have enough to pay them the week. But I say, old man"—he tried to be friendly again—"you won't let it come to that, will you? Just think—if the play has to come off—how *your* reputation will suffer!"

Hapgood lost his temper. "*You* might have thought of that—before you bought the play."

"My dear chap, you don't suggest we did it on purpose?"

"Don't 'dear chap' me, Leesthorpe." All the dramatist's suppressed dislike of the man rose to the surface. "You and your wife are in a hole. A deuce of a hole. You think you can bring pressure on me to help you out of it."

"Pressure!" Leesthorpe, jowl twitching, forced a smile. 'Pressure! My dear fellow!" Then, wheedling: "Of course, I understand your being vexed. But the play's a winner. You've always thought that. And with Hélène's public! Besides, to a rich man, to a successful playwright like yourself, what's two thousand pounds!"

HAPGOOD kept silence, many thoughts passing through his mind. The position was certainly unique, dramatic; the play, properly acted, as near a certain winner as anything can be certain in theatreland. If it "went over," his two thousand might become four, six, eight. But could he find two thousand? At once! The bank would lend it, of course. But that meant pawning securities, investments. And investments were falling. Supposing the play failed! Besides, he had promised Mrs. John——

"You *will* think it over, won't you?" Leesthorpe was still talking. "Remember, Hélène's never been in a failure yet."

And at that, abruptly, Hapgood's mental eye saw two visions—a London theatre and a provincial "fit-up"; Marian Delorme as played by Hélène Dalby and Marian Delorme as played by Moira Mitchell.

"Leesthorpe," he began, "let's put our cards on the table. It isn't a dramatist's business to finance his own plays. But if he does, he's entitled to speak his mind. Now, I'm going to speak mine. To begin with, I don't think 'The Young Lady in Mauve' suits your wife's style of acting."

Hugh Leesthorpe leaned forward from his chair as though the other had struck him in the stomach. "You don't think——" he stammered.

Calmly, John Hapgood repeated his statement; calmly, he went on to state his terms. Stating them, a new sensation came to him—the sensation of power. Always, heretofore, he had needed to go tactfully through that dark jungle which is theatreland. Now, for the first time, he allowed himself the luxury of truth-telling.

"I'm not blaming you, Leesthorpe," he said. "A man naturally overrates his wife's abilities. Your confidence in her is all to your credit. But—take it from me—the part's beyond her. If I'm to put up this money, she'll have to throw it up."

And to that last issue Hapgood stuck. Vainly the other raved, protested, showed his teeth; vainly—for three long days—he wrote, telegraphed, argued in person and over the telephone; vainly he threatened to "put the curtain up for a week and risk it."

"You can't do that," said Hapgood, blandly; "you haven't got enough cash for the preliminary advertising."

Finally, in despair, Leesthorpe went to Saxby. "Hapgood's mad," said Leesthorpe. "Quite mad. If once the public knows that my wife's thrown up the part, it's good-bye to 'The Young Lady in Mauve.'"

"Old boy," said Saxby, trying, agent-like, to sit on both sides of the fence, "you're absolutely right. Let *me* settle this. I'm sure *I* can bring him to reason."

But Saxby, calling in person at Hapgood's hotel, was met with a quiet, "Please don't interfere. I'm handling this deal on my own."

VI.

AFTER her two-minute interview with Leesthorpe—an interview during which the star's husband had seemed, even to her unimagining eyes, like a man distraught—Moira Mitchell walked home to the suburban room she occupied when 'resting." Leesthorpe had promised to "let her know if he could give her anything."

For a day, the vague promise buoyed her hopes; for a day, she thought glowingly of Hapgood's praise, of Hapgood's influence Then—as a second day, and a third, and yet a fourth, passed without word—hope sank.

"I'm no good," thought Moira. 'They don't want me. He only came round after the show—for the usual reason. Or perhaps just because he was bored. Bored! He can't be as bored as I am. I wish I could get some work. Any sort of work. Even the movies."

By the fifth morning she was in despair. The bare lodging-house room seemed like a prison. "If only I could get my chance!" she thought. "Just one chance of a really

good part." Listlessly she pecked at her inadequate breakfast; listlessly she picked up the morning paper and turned—as is the wont of professionals—to "Theatrical Notes."

"The first night of 'The Young Lady in Mauve,'" read Moira Mitchell, "has been unavoidably postponed. Miss Hélène Dalby, having caught a severe chill, is confined to her bed. It is hoped that she will be sufficiently recovered to produce Mr. John Hapgood's new comedy on the twenty-fourth of this month, instead of the seventeenth as previously arranged."

Somehow, the news consoled Moira. At least it provided sufficient reason for her own non-engagement. She read on—till, suddenly, a knock on the front door disturbed reading. A moment later the landlady entered.

"Telegram for you, miss," ejaculated the landlady. "And the boy's waiting for an answer."

Opening the wire, Moira read: "Can you call theatre four p.m. to-day? If so, ask for me personally. Reply paid.—John Hapgood."

VII.

"HALF an hour, please." The call-boy's voice rang on Moira Mitchell's ears like the voice of doom. She heard her dresser answer, "Thank you"; heard the boy's boots go clattering up the stone stairs.

It was the first night of "The Young Lady in Mauve." The first night! And in thirty minutes she, Moira Mitchell, would have to go on stage and play—the heroine of the comedy. That, of course, couldn't be true. Moira Mitchell didn't get that sort of chance. Moira Mitchell was a failure—a failure.

"Quarter of an hour, please." Now sheer panic had the girl in its grip. Her fingers, as she dabbed the last touch of black on her eyelashes, trembled like fiddle-strings; she could scarcely see her own image in the mirror.

Behind her, deft, unemotional, stood the dresser. "I shouldn't put on any more if I was you, miss."

"Thank you, Mrs. Watkins." The actress's voice quivered. She herself hardly heard it. Her mind whirled like the compass-needle in a typhoon. She tried to think of her opening speech, but the words eluded her. She wanted, suddenly, to cry.

Her mind seized on the past three weeks; worried at them as a terrier worries paper. She saw herself facing Hapgood; felt her heart flutter at his words: "You've seen the papers, Miss Mitchell? Miss Dalby's illness is"—had he hesitated ever so slightly?—"worse than the public suspects. I want you to play her part." She remembered signing a contract, remembered the feel of the "script" he had given her.

The script lay on her dressing-table. She picked it up, tried to "study." But the words blurred before her eyes; her eyes turned inward, visioning the rehearsals. She heard Hapgood's voice, the producer's: "I don't quite like that movement, Miss Mitchell"; "I think we might cut that line, don't you, Miss Mitchell?"

And "It can't be true," thought the painted girl in the mauve frock; "it simply can't be true that Hélène Dalby should have fallen ill—that John Hapgood should have given me the part!"

"Beginners for Act One, please," shrilled the call-boy's voice; and, abruptly, the girl's mind grew steady. Her body still wanted to shake; she knew her body weak, flaccid. But her brain could control her body; her brain said, "Has the overture started, Mrs. Watkins?"

"Yes, miss."

VIII.

AS well ask the soldier who goes "over the bags" to describe his sensations, as an actress after a first night to remember the incidents thereof. To Moira Mitchell the three hours of her triumph—for triumph it was—passed like a vari-coloured nightmare of mental and physical emotion. She was conscious of herself, vaguely, as the "unknown" whom John Hapgood had "discovered"; as Moira Mitchell, playing "all out" for her career; as "the young lady in mauve" who had to speak certain lines on pain of death; as the centre of a thousand faces, the applauded of a thousand palms; as a puppet in the hands of Mrs. Watkins, and a puppet in the arms of the hero. But most of all she was conscious of two eyes in the auditorium—two middle-aged kindly eyes that watched her and watched. . . Somewhere behind those eyes dwelt pity, and understanding, and hope.

Even during those last delirious five minutes when she found herself standing at John Hapgood's side, the company semi-circled behind them and the rocking "house" semicircled in front, Moira had been conscious of those eyes. Even now, through the tears and the grease-paint, she could see them.

For now, now that it was all over, Moira had collapsed—as an oarsman collapses after a well-rowed race. She lay—frockless, but still grease-painted—on the dressing-room sofa. Her bare shoulders heaved. Her whitened hands were inert among the cushions. She was sobbing to herself, quietly, happily almost.

Mrs. Watkins, wise to the game, had locked the door. "Miss Mitchell can't see

"'You wonderful, wonderful woman!' stammered Mrs. John. 'How did you do it? How did you have the nerve?'"

anyone yet," she kept calling to the invisible presences in the corridor.

At last Moira's sobs ceased. "I'm all right now, Mrs. Watkins," she said, faintly. The dresser threw a kimono over one arm, and moved towards the sofa. Moira, sitting up, allowed herself to be wrapped. Then, still dazed, she rose to her feet; walked to the dressing-table, and began dabbing cold cream on the mixture of paint and tear-drops which was her complexion.

Process finished, she asked: "Is there anyone outside, Mrs. Watkins?"

"A few of them, miss." The dresser smiled.

"Must I see them?"

"Not if you don't want to, miss. I'll tell them to go away, if you like."

"Who are they?"

"There's Mr. Hapgood that I know of, miss. And *he's* got a lady with him."

"A lady?"

"Yes. His wife, I expect, miss. I know she was in Box B."

"His wife!" The girl in the emerald kimono smiled surprise. "His wife! Why, I didn't even know Mr. Hapgood was married. Ask them both to come in, please, Mrs. Watkins."

And a moment later there entered—still almost white with emotion—the owner of those kindly middle-aged eyes. Behind her came the dramatist.

"My dear," he began, "this is Miss Mitchell——"

But Mrs. John Hapgood—her face, no longer young, was kind as her eyes had been—disdained introductions. In a flash her bare arms were round Moira's shoulders; in a flash she had kissed her on both cheeks.

"You wonderful, wonderful woman!" stammered Mrs. John. "How did you do it? How did you have the nerve? It just petrified me! Petrified me! To know all that money—our home—all John's future at stake." She hesitated. "But perhaps it was just that knowledge which made you play so divinely."

"Money! Future! Home!" Moira's face blanched. "What money? What future? What home? I don't understand."

"Of course Miss Mitchell doesn't understand." Half in jest, half in earnest, John Hapgood shook a fist at his wife. "And you had no business to tell her."

'Tell me what, Mr. Hapgood?"

The dramatist laughed. "Well, you see, one way and another, there was a good deal at stake this evening. To begin with, Hélène Dalby's illness was—shall we say?—diplomatic. As a matter of fact, I bought the whole play back from Leesthorpe."

"He mortgaged our place in the country to do it," interjected Mrs. John.

"So that we stood to lose the best part of five thousand if it had gone down," went on Mrs. John's husband. "To say nothing of the fact that I promised my wife to give up theatrical writing altogether if 'The Young Lady' didn't succeed."

"And has it succeeded?" asked Moira. She had to ask some question—or collapse once again.

"Has it succeeded?" Hapgood's big mouth opened in a grin. "Has it succeeded? Why, the ticket agencies couldn't even wait till to-morrow morning. We've sold out the stalls three months ahead—and the dress-circle four. You were quite right, you see, Miss Mitchell—good work does count in the end."

"Does it?" Moira's eyebrows crinkled in thought. "Does it? I'm just beginning to wonder." And she added, half to herself: "Why wasn't I told about the money?"

SAID Mrs. John to her husband as they drove to their hotel: "Why didn't you tell her before, John?"

Answered John Hapgood, playwright: "Firstly, my dear, because she'd probably have given a rotten performance if I had; secondly, because it wasn't her business anyway; and lastly, because it never pays to tell *anyone* the truth in theatreland."

"Don't try and be cynical with *me*, darling," retorted Mrs. John. "You know you love the theatre."

And John Hapgood, purveyor of illusion, admitted to his private soul the correctness of her diagnosis.

THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS

by

SIR OLIVER LODGE

CAN there be any meaning in such a phrase, or is it the outcome of an unreasoning optimism? However it was originally used, it seems to me that "the best of all possible worlds" is a description capable of definition and comprehension, and need not be regarded as absurd. No one looking at the evil and cruelty and abominations which in many parts of the planet are rife—no one can possibly suppose that the earth is perfect or anywhere near perfection; and many have felt inclined to arraign the Deity for permitting so much evil to exist, or else have ventured to deny that there could be a beneficent Creator at all. Undoubtedly there is much evil, much human sin, and every variety of imperfection. Even the saints have felt smitten with a sense of guilt, and of falling far below their own ideals. How then can it be said that the world is the best possible that could have been made under the circumstances?

THE last three words are important. Given the conditions, the world is as good as it could be made—that is the meaning of the phrase at the head of this article; and we must consider what those conditions are.

Given, for the sake of argument, an omnipotent God, it is clear that a perfect piece of machinery could have been constructed; one that would never go wrong, but would execute the behest of its designer with absolute regularity for ever.

Even a man can make mechanism so perfect that it will continue to keep time with regularity for years and years. There is nothing at all inconceivable about perfection of mechanism; and if the planet were designed and constructed on mechanical lines, then it, too, might have been perfect. So far as it consists of inorganic and lifeless materials it is perfect already; every atom obeys the forces acting on it with absolute precision; there is no trace of rebellion or self-will in inorganic nature.

The difficulty comes in when life and mind have to be taken into account. Directly an element of self-determination or free will is introduced, everything becomes much more complex. If humanity is free, if it be once granted a charter of freedom, it must be free to go wrong as well as to go right. It cannot be coerced. If it be forced to go right, like mechanism, there would be no merit in its actions—nor any sense of responsibility. Beings constructed on mechanical lines might be mechanically perfect, but their perfection would be of a low order. In no sense could they ever develop into creatures fit for companionship with Deity. They would be lower even than savages possessing the power of self-determination; for there would be no future before them, no possibilities of heroic achievement, nothing to relieve the deadly monotony of mechanical perfection.

The problem of creation was a much higher one than that. We must assume that the scheme involved the gradual creation of a race of free beings endowed with a spark of the divine, a race with a knowledge of good and evil, with a power of choice. Determined in their actions by motives and intentions, truly, but self-determined; not kept in grooves by an alien power, but free to roam over the board, to go through the whole gamut of conduct, to make mistakes, to find out their errors, to perceive for themselves the destructiveness of sin, the merit and safety of virtue, and to choose for themselves the path they ultimately take.

Such a race may go grievously wrong, it may fall into pathetic blunders, it may commit atrocious crimes, but it has an infinite potentiality before it. It may rise till it becomes as gods; it may fall till it becomes as devils.

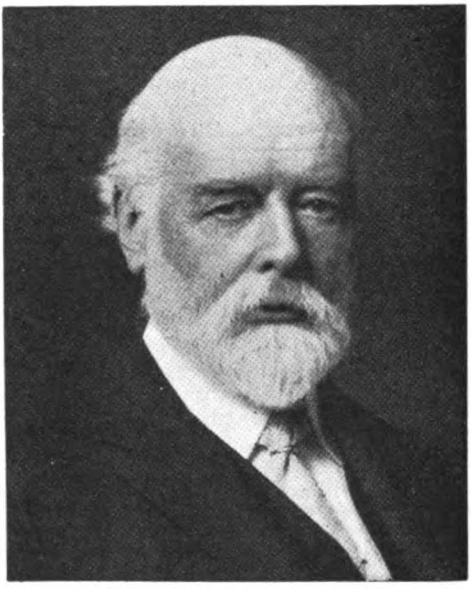
The whole power of Deity is impotent to coerce such a race of free beings into anything

like perfection. The charter of freedom has been granted and cannot be abrogated. The risk must be run. For better for worse, they must decide their own destiny.

They can be influenced, helped, guided, led—yes; but not pushed, impelled, or forced. Even the Highest can only reach them by example, by precept, by warning, by instruction. The highest of the race may be made use of to instruct and awaken their fellows. All manner of wholesome influences may be rained upon them. But if they will not hear, if they will not mend their own ways, if they will not look up and ask for aid, all those efforts may be wasted and lost upon them.

The world is as good as it could be made under those conditions.

But was the risk worth running? It is not for us to judge with anything approaching Divine foresight, and yet we can see that if such a race ultimately does emerge from error, really does set itself along noble paths—if it decides to go right, because of its free choice in that direction, because it willed to do so, and not because it must—then the creation of such a race might be infinitely worth while; for the standard of achievement will ultimately become something higher than we can readily imagine.



SIR OLIVER LODGE.

Taken by A. A. Campbell Swinton, F.R.S., by electric arc light, at midnight on 21st May, 1921.

IT is no great act of faith to assume that to a Vision so far-sighted and patient that it could wait four hundred million years for the appearance of a human race upon this planet, the outcome of a free and responsible race of beings such as can, in the long process of future time, be evolved, looms so majestic and lofty that all the sin and suffering, all the tedious stages through which we now and for many centuries must pass, are more than justified.

This planet can still look forward to millions of years of habitable temperature. The sun shows no sign of fading for another twenty million years; who can say what in that period may not be accomplished?

Moreover, progress is growing constantly more rapid. Man has become a conscious agent in the management of things. Men will already sacrifice all they possess in pursuit of high and unselfish ends; as we have seen in the war.

Hope is in the air, we can co-operate in the Divine plan, we can help and stimulate each other. Weak and erring mortals as we are, yet we feel within us infinite possibilities.

The future lies large and splendid before us, both before the race and before individuals too. The frustrated struggle of our earth life is not for ever. Progress is possible both for the individual and the race, and the ultimate Destiny of Man is so lofty that in the long last we shall look back upon all this travail, this long effort to bring to birth a truly Divine race, and be satisfied that all the intermediate stages, all its imperfections, its terrible trials and griefs, are stages inevitable toward the attainment of the main result—the attainment of perfection not by compulsion but by free will.

The present state of the world is but a step in the age-long process. Imperfection is rampant and obvious, yet already we catch more than a glimmering of hope, and perceive that the end and aim are far beyond anything that could have been attained in any other way. The world—desperately imperfect as it now is—is yet the best world that could have so far been constructed. It is an embryo, not a finished product. It is ugly because incomplete. The finished product is far ahead. It is our mission and privilege to help and hasten the process, but it cannot be unduly hurried. Not even God can hasten it beyond what our free will permits. He can see the ultimate outcome, he can inspire us with some dim vision of it, and so help us on the steep and thorny way to the realization of it.

Let no man presume to say that this world is less good than it might have been made. That would be blasphemy. Given the conditions and the ultimate aim, and the present incompleteness, then we may confidently assert that at its present stage the world is the best of all that were possible, under the conditions and subject to the ultimate hope.

In that sense, and in that sense only, this is the best of all possible worlds.

GETTING RID OF M.

by

W·B·MAXWELL

ILLUSTRATED BY W. HATHERELL R.I.

MR. AND MRS. CRANE had a compartment to themselves in the train that took them homeward to Herne Hill after their visit to the solicitor's office, and thus there was no need to conceal the emotion that both felt.

They were an elderly childless couple who hitherto had possessed just sufficient means to enable them to live in decent comfort, and now they had become rich—that is, rich by comparison; rich, from the humble middle-class point of view. This wonderful thing had happened to them—the thing they had dreamed of and yet scarcely dared to think of. Their uncle, the auctioneer, had left them all his money.

"Old lady," said Mr. Crane, patting his wife on the knee, "do you begin to understand what it means?"

And they decided at once that, whatever else it meant, it meant dismissing Marjorie, their young servant.

Indeed, as they agreed, this separation was overdue. For too long they had put up with her familiarity and impudence. In improved circumstances her freedoms would be quite intolerable. Of course, if she had been a girl that you could keep in her place—but you couldn't. Only a week ago Mrs. Nelson, a friend drinking tea with them, had said, "I wonder you allow that girl to join in the conversation unasked. If she was a servant of mine I shouldn't like it."

"Yes," said Mrs. Crane, as her husband helped her out of the train, "we must get rid of M. without any further shilly-shally." And as they walked along the platform to the barrier, she saw in bright visions a flat situated nearer the centre of London, say at West Kensington, with two smart servants wearing caps and starched aprons—a cook and a housemaid, who called her Madam instead of Mrs. Crane. In imagination she could hear the respectful parlourmaid receiving a visitor at the flat door, and the little scene formed a terrible contrast to M.'s careless unceremonious methods. At the same time Mr. Crane was thinking with great satisfaction that they were not too old to travel. He would take Mrs. Crane to foreign parts.

Then, as they turned the corner into their own familiar road, they both had the swift illusion that they were seeing it for the first time. Certainly they had never known that this was what it really looked like. With its small drab-coloured houses, all of one pattern, it seemed a poor little shabby affair. Their expanding ideas, their new sensations of power, had dwarfed it.

The money had lifted them into another world. Henceforth they must live more genteelly, in a style befitting their altered condition; but they were far too simple and kindly by nature to entertain any vainglorious notions. Whatever else they might do, there was something that they had to do first. As they walked up the road they spoke only of the getting rid of M.

"And don't call her that any more," said Mrs. Crane. "Nor Marge either. Give her her name in full—Marjorie."

"Will you speak to her before dinner or afterwards?" asked Mr. Crane.

"I shall drop her a hint straight away, and have it out with her before tea-time."

"Will you require me to be there?" asked Mr. Crane, with perhaps a slight indication of timidity.

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"No, I do not think your presence will be needed."

"So I thought myself," said Mr. Crane, evidently relieved.

"I shall require you to confirm my words," said Mrs. Crane. "That is, if she wishes it."

"Just so," said Mr. Crane. "And—well, of course, I can, so to speak, gild the pill by promising her a present. And I might add that she can look to us to tide her over—well, if she has difficulty in finding another situation."

"My dear, she'll get another situation all right. Only she'll have to mind her p's and q's in it. There's not the slightest occasion for us to worry."

"No, I suppose not. Of course, it's you who've made her what she is."

Mrs. Crane stopped short and turned upon him very indignantly.

"I only meant," he said, explaining, "that you have done so much for her. She came to us an ignorant child, and by your training you have made her a capable, efficient servant—that is, except for her taking liberties, which you rightly object to."

"And whose fault is it that she takes liberties?" asked Mrs. Crane, still indignant. "Whose fault—from the very beginning? Showing her the difference of the trains, letting her keep a rabbit, calling her M."

"Yes, I suppose I was wrong there."

Then Mrs. Crane became mollified and magnanimous. They agreed that they had both been to blame; by encouraging her, making her too much of a friend, being amused by her when they ought to have been angry with her.

"Now," said Mrs. Crane in a whisper, as Mr. Crane opened the front door with his latchkey, "we *must* be firm. No nonsense."

At the sound of their entrance, Marjorie bounded into the narrow hall clamouring for news.

"Don't keep me in suspense. Is it what you didn't dare hope for?"

They told her briefly and solemnly it was a fact that they had inherited a fortune.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" she shouted. "Oh, so glad! Like some lovely fairy-tale, isn't it?" And she went out into the little kitchen and sang and danced there, and broke a plate. She rushed back to explain that she was off her head with sheer delight about the fortune.

Mrs. Crane checked this exuberance and gave her a first hint by reminding her that it was they and not she who had come into the fortune.

M. pushed the tumbled hair back from her forehead and stared at them with her large brown eyes.

"Of course I know that," she said. "What a funny thing for you to say, Mrs. Crane!" And for a moment she continued to look at them wonderingly. Then she clapped her hands and laughed as gaily as before. "Never mind. Dinner—what? I expect you're both ravenous. Happiness always makes one hungry." And she ran back to the kitchen.

In a minute or two she was bringing the hot dishes into the dining-room. She put the tray down, laid her hands on her knees, and looked at the master and mistress with bright laughing eyes.

"Oh, you two! Let me feast my sight on the millionaires. Oh, I could go mad with it! Dinner is served, my lord. Sit down, my lady." And in a sort of paroxysm of joyous affection she took Mrs. Crane by the arm and led her to the table. "Eat your food. I know you must want it. You're both of you half-dazed, aren't you? Scarcely believing it's true yet—what?"

Immediately after dinner Mr. Crane went out into their strip of garden so as to leave the house clear for the performance of Mrs. Crane's necessary task. He stood meditating by the rows of French beans that April showers and May sunshine had brought on nicely; and he only raised his head when a Kent Coast train went swinging past on the high embankment. He thought then of how quick little M. had been in learning to distinguish between the long-distance trains and the suburban traffic; of how she used to shout to him as he dug the borders, "Boat express coming, Mr. Crane. I recognize the whistle." There was no crime in that, of course, so long as she was quite young; truly it was very much to her credit, since she merely took interest in the trains because he took interest in them. Girls never really care about trains. Whereas boys are sometimes so fond of them that the fondness lasts till they are grey-headed and elderly.

It was a beautiful bright afternoon; on branches of the only large tree, the sycamore in the patch of waste ground behind No. 30, birds were singing. And M. was singing too. Through the kitchen window she poured out waves of joyous music as she did her work; and Mr. Crane thought that really her song was rather pleasant to hear. Then he sighed. It would soon stop. Mrs. Crane had not yet spoken to her; Mrs. Crane was pulling herself together, arranging suitable words for the unavoidable communication, bracing up her firmness all alone in the dining-room.

Suddenly the girl came out into the garden.

"Mr. Crane," she said, "may I pick half-a-dozen of those carnations for the table?"

"He watched her while she picked the flowers, doing it in a careful way, exactly as he had taught her."

"Yes, M., of course you may. Er—by all means, Marjorie."

"I want to decorate as well as I can, in honour of the day."

He watched her while she picked the flowers, doing it in a careful way, exactly as he had taught her. She was humming now, not singing; bright, alert, busy, and intent, but all the while as happy as any bird in the sycamore.

"There," she said, when she had snapped off the six blooms, "smell them. Aren't they sweet?" and she held the posy to his nose. "I must say the carnations are a feather in your cap this year, Mr. Crane."

"Thank you, my dear," he said, stooping and sniffing. Then he stood up and flushed. "That will do, Marjorie. Go on with your work."

"Nearly done it," she said, cheerfully. "That is, I haven't cleared the table, because I didn't want to disturb Mrs. Crane. I hope she's getting her nap in there. It'll do her good."

She had not the faintest notion of what was impending. Mr. Crane watched her as she went back to the house with the fragrant flowers, a neat little figure in a print frock, her slender shoulders squared, her small head carried easily, almost defiantly, as of one secure in the moment, confident about the future.

"I say." She had suddenly turned. "In the excitement I quite forgot to tell you that they ran the boat express in two divisions this morning."

"Oh, did they?"

"Yes, they made two fairly heavy trains of it. Two Pullmans and seven coaches on the second. I didn't count the first." And she disappeared.

MR. CRANE lit his pipe, went to the bottom of the garden, and looked at the empty hutch in which he had allowed M. to keep her piebald Belgian hare. That rabbit-keeping had been rather fun, especially when the animal now and then escaped. He and M. had had one tremendous hunt before they recaptured it, with Mrs. Crane standing at the back door and laughing so heartily that she grew quite faint. He looked at the weather-cock that he had made for M. to stick up high above the hutch. It was a model aeroplane, and he and M. had constructed it during vacant hours; he doing the woodwork and she fixing the wire struts and string stays.

All that sort of friendliness and familiarity did not matter in those early days, but he saw now that he had been very wrong to let it go on. It created a difficulty or uneasiness where there should not have been any. It made the getting rid of M. seem strange.

He had called her M. because when she first came—in a short frock and with a pig-tail down her back—she used to sign her name, "M. Yates," on everything; and this made him laugh. When she went out she left little notes on the hall table: "Gone to get the fish. Shall be back in ten minutes. M. Yates." "I have found your collar-stud. It was under the bed. M. Yates." And so on.

Standing by the rabbit-hutch and thinking of these things, he remembered how at the time when they first got the little girl Mrs. Crane herself did nearly all the household work. The original idea had been that Mrs. Crane would obtain some slight relief but no real help from her childish untrained assistant; however, M., growing older, did more and more, until nowadays she did everything. She liked work; she had the kind of active temperament that finds work if you do not provide it; she jumped to fill gaps and absorbed duties that others were ready to perform—as, for instance, fetching down his slippers every evening.

"Marjorie," said Mrs. Crane, opening the dining-room door, "come here, please. I wish to speak to you."

Mr. Crane had returned to the house and was in the hall. He snatched up his straw hat; and, with a nod and a gesture to Mrs. Crane, he hurried out into the road.

He went for a long walk; and when he returned about five o'clock he stood in the hall and listened. The house seemed to be oppressively silent; but then, listening, he heard M.'s footsteps in the kitchen. She was getting tea ready as usual. But she neither sang nor hummed.

Mrs. Crane was sitting in the dining-room, looking red and flustered.

"I've done it," she said—"told her everything—all the reasons."

"How did she take it?"

"On the whole, she took it very well. Of course I could see it was an awful disappointment to her. It made me uncomfortable." And Mrs. Crane moved her hands, frowned, and looked at her husband. "You see, the girl is fond of us. That's what made it more difficult than I expected. That's just the bother—there's no doubt the girl's really fond of us. Anyhow, it had to be done and I've done it. It's over."

"Did she cry or anything of that sort?"

"Not in here. But I think she's been crying out there. Hush!"

Mr. Crane went to the window and looked at the roadway as M. came into the room with the tea-cloth. He stole furtive glances at her while she placed the tea-things in position, and he saw that her face was pale and that her eyes had red rims round them. Moreover, she looked strangely small and frail; her shoulders drooped, and all the spring and elasticity seemed to have gone from her movements.

"Tea is ready, ma'am," she said, in a subdued voice; and, as she passed close to him going out of the room, Mr. Crane noticed that her lips were trembling.

"Did you tell her to call you ma'am?" he asked.

"I mentioned it—among other reasons—

only when putting it to her that it was usual; and that it was a sign of her ignorance of what is expected from an educated parlour-maid."

"I see. Shall I say anything to her?"

"No; she's still too much upset. Wait till to-morrow, and then say a few kind words."

They drank their tea without enjoyment.

They had no appetite at supper either. M. waited upon them with silent care; that she felt very miserable was obvious; yet she showed great dignity. Not a word, not a gesture of a reproachful character could be detected, but Mr. Crane observed that she avoided meeting his eyes with hers.

During the evening they talked about her.

"How long has she been with us?" asked Mr. Crane.

"Five years."

"That's a long time, isn't it? How old is she now?"

"Nineteen. Twenty next birthday."

"Ah!" And there was a long silence before Mr. Crane spoke again. "I suppose," he said, feebly and tentatively, "we couldn't come to any sort of compromise?"

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I mean, after making her understand exactly what is expected in the sort of company we shall henceforth be keeping, give her the offer to stay with us for a bit longer temporarily—on trial as it were?"

Mrs. Crane moved her hands as if in distress, but she replied with firmness.

"My dear, I know what you feel. You see the girl is upset, and you are upset yourself. I am upset, too. But really we mustn't let sensitiveness obscure our judgment. Hush! No more now."

M. came in with his slippers. She put them down by the corner of the hearth, on the spot that they always occupied whether the season was summer or winter; but to-night she did not offer to help him off with his boots.

"Your gardening gloves!" she said, tonelessly. "I've washed them again; also the flannel shirt and those three collars. You'll find them in the small top drawer—the left-hand drawer."

"Er—thank you, Marjorie."

"Good night, ma'am. Good night, sir."

"Good night, Marjorie."

It seemed to Mr. Crane that her eyes were wet with tears, and that if she had remained in the room a moment longer her self-possession would have abandoned her. As she hurried away she made a sound like a sniff or a sob.

Next day the little house was strangely silent; and both of them missed the laughter and gaiety with which M. used to fill it. That was inevitable, for the force of habit, whether good or bad, is so great. Right or wrong, they had grown accustomed to the singing on the stairs, the familiar chaff, the impudent jokes—in a word, to all the liberties to which they had properly put a stop; and the sudden annihilation of the objectionable practices shook them.

There was something defiant about M. at breakfast; she put one of the dishes on the hot plate with a distinct bang, and Mr. Crane, startled, felt afraid that she was going to have an outburst. After breakfast Mrs. Crane said she was sulking, but Mr. Crane feared that this new attitude had been assumed to hide her affliction. At dinner she ignored an attempt he made to draw her into the conversation. The thing was on his nerves now. The discomfort and constraint deepened every hour, and he thought that he would not have strength to bear it for another thirty days, until M.'s notice of dismissal expired.

He suggested that they should give her a jolly good present—something really handsome—and get rid of her at once.

But Mrs. Crane said that was out of the question; that would indeed upset the girl most horribly; it would seem unfair and unkind.

"She'll be reconciled in a day or two. I'll have a little quiet talk with her after tea. Don't you worry."

HOW could he help worrying? In his altered circumstances he had a hundred things that he ought to think about and attend to; and this getting rid of M. was occupying him entirely. Once he felt an irritable revolt, an angry sense of injustice and the cruelty of fate. Talk about being fair, it wasn't fair to him to allow him to be so worried. He had a right to be comfortable in his own house, and to have matters settled one way or the other without delay. Either keep her or remove her from his sight, and let him get on with life. Besides, what the devil had it to do with that interfering old frump, Mrs. Nelson? "I'm master in my own house, and if I choose to allow my servants to talk to me freely, I suppose I can do it without Mrs. Nelson's permission."

But, even while his brief anger lasted, he recognized that in such thoughts there was disloyalty to his wife. He conquered them. Mrs. Crane knew best; whatever she thought right must be done. Bless her dear faithful, loving heart.

They both talked to M. after tea, inquiring into her circumstances as they had never done before. As they knew, she possessed no parents, and they were surprised by her confession that she was not on very good terms with her aunt, a hard, objectionable woman who lived at Bethnal Green. It was

to the aunt that she would have to go at the end of her month.

"She'll take me in all right," said M. "At least, if you'll give me a letter saying I've done nothing wrong."

"Indeed I will," said Mrs. Crane, eagerly. "I shall give you the highest character, and explain that we only part with you because our plans are entirely changed."

"And you sha'n't want for expenses—I mean, beyond your present," said Mr. Crane.

"I'll take my wages, but nothing else, sir."

"Oh, don't answer like that," said Mrs. Crane; "and don't think that either of us will cease to take interest in you. We both of us wish you had a pleasanter home to go to."

"It isn't a home at all," said M., desolately. "This has been my home," and again her eyes were wet with tears. "But I quite understand, ma'am—and please don't let it bother you. You couldn't do otherwise. I—I see it all. Funny if I didn't see it, after what you said yesterday. I—I have my pride, too." She dashed her hand across her eyes, and spoke with resolution. "No chance—unless I was further educated. You—you've been very good not to throw it in my teeth before. I—tried—my best—but an ignorant girl like me—who'd disgrace you. But I'll get another place, and I'll try again. Perhaps I'm not too old to learn."

"M.," said Mr. Crane, "pull a chair to the table."

"I prefer to stand, sir."

"No; do as I tell you. I can't talk to you standing there. It seems so strange."

"Everything's strange now."

"There—there's the chair. This has got to be talked over quietly. I can't have you thinking that Mrs. Crane and I aren't fond of you."

"You've shown it, with a vengeance, haven't you?"

Then M. broke down. She laid her face upon the tea-table and wept most bitterly.

"I hadn't one thought for myself, no, I hadn't," she sobbed out, when she grew calmer.

"I'm sure you hadn't," said Mr. Crane.

The passionate self-justification of M. was terrible to him; it overwhelmed him. He felt as if he and Mrs. Crane were enormous in size, two huge grey-haired executioners standing over this piteously small, defenceless, fragile victim. "Please don't say another word, M.," and he patted her trembling shoulders.

"I was happy you got the money," she went on, "because I knew you wanted it. I never thought once of myself—except the pleasure of seeing you enjoy it. I thought you aren't so young as you used to be; you need comforts. I've seen how Mrs. Crane had to pinch—yes, from the beginning—and I understood. I wouldn't take so much as a lump of sugar—no, not even when I was only a child."

"I know you didn't," said Mrs. Crane, fervently.

"No, because I understood. All I cared was to serve you faithfully." And M. had another violent gust of tears. "When—when—you came home and looked at me so queer, I was mad with pleasure. Why? Because I thought, Now, poor dears, they can have all they want. I thought Mrs. Crane can have her flat that she has hankered after, and no longer need to pinch and calculate. And Mr. Crane he can go in those trains and see the world and afford to treat himself with a glass of brandy with his coffee. And what were you thinking already—plotting it together? To be rid of poor little M.!" and she wept more piteously than ever.

Over her quivering back Mr. and Mrs. Crane were exchanging glances and signs; and suddenly, as if having received a full authorization, Mr. Crane patted her with a firm, decisive touch.

"Listen, M. Stop crying and listen. Mrs. Crane and I have made a mistake, and we admit it. Everything is withdrawn. Speaking for Mrs. Crane as well as for myself, I say now that we wish you to stay on with us."

M. sprang up from the table.

"Oh, no," she said, wildly and bitterly. "Not I—not much. I wouldn't stay with you now if you both went on your knees and prayed it. I'll stay my month and not one day more—no, not if you gave me half your fortune."

And she dashed from the room, leaving them both shattered.

"Well, did you ever?" said Mrs. Crane.

"Yes, upon my word, what next?" said Mr. Crane. "But of course it's her pride that made her speak like that. She didn't mean it. We must make allowances."

He went out into the garden and made the allowances. He did not blame her for the spirit that she had just shown; he admired her, he respected her for it. He understood how dreadful is the pain of lacerated pride and rebuffed affection—more especially in one's youth, before one has learned the coldness and cruelty of the world by repeated experiences. The younger and more ignorant one is the more one suffers.

And Mr. Crane felt a very poignant remorse. The first thing that they had done with their money had been to wound an innocent little heart; their very first act as rich people was an act of gross unkindness.

He stood thinking it over by the rabbit-

hutch, while the trains rattled past on the embankment unnoticed. He had grievous mental pictures of M. after they had separated. He saw her in that wretched hovel at Bethnal Green, bullied by the aunt, with some decent young fellow of whom everybody approved, home and children, peace and honour.

As he thought of all this, a monstrously fantastic notion came into his mind.

"'Oh, no,' she said, wildly and bitterly, 'I wouldn't stay with you now if you both went on your knees and prayed it.'"

depraved by bad company; then as the drudge of an unkind mistress, all the fun and joy crushed out of her, played the fool with by the young man of the house perhaps, got into trouble; dropping lower, going to the bad altogether, dying in a hospital. That might be her future when abandoned by those able to take care of her, instead of marriage

"ARE you awake?" he asked.

"Yes, wide awake."

It was in the middle of the night now, and both of them had been tossing and turning ever since they laid down to rest.

"I thought I heard something. Keep quiet and listen. There. Didn't you hear it? I believe it's M. crying again."

Mrs. Crane could not hear it, but she begged him to go out upon the landing to make sure. He flung himself into a dressing-gown and without troubling to put on his slippers went to the foot of the upper flight of stairs and listened there. The soft summer night was very still; moreover, in the small, flimsily-built house quite slight sounds penetrated from room to room and floor to floor; but all was silent. Listening intently, he could hear the clock tick downstairs in the kitchen, the creaking of their bedstead as Mrs. Crane moved herself, the drip of a tap in the tiny larder, and so on, but nothing abnormal.

Then suddenly the other sound began once more, so strongly and plainly that it seemed close to him—M. upstairs in her bedroom under the roof sobbing as though her heart would break.

He hurried back to Mrs. Crane.

"For goodness' sake go up to her and try to comfort her and soothe her."

"Yes, I will, I will," said Mrs. Crane, scrambling out of bed; and she snatched at her dressing-gown and threw a shawl over her head.

Mr. Crane lit the gas, put on his slippers, listened, waited. It seemed an immense time before Mrs. Crane came downstairs again.

"Well?"

Mrs. Crane shook her head. Her grey hair had fallen loose about her neck, the shawl trailed over her shoulder, her face was twitching.

"It's very painful," she said, brokenly. "The whole thing is more painful than I could have believed." And they sat side by side on the edge of the bed looking at each other. "Inadvertently," Mrs. Crane continued, "we have cut her to the quick, and it seems as if she can't get over it. She's absolutely determined to leave us. I put it to her that she could easily pick up new ways—for that's where her pride is most hurt—I mean, what I said about other servants—but she only answers that if she improved one day she'd relapse the next. She says, after living with us so long on the terms she has, she feels she couldn't live with us on any other terms."

Then Mr. Crane broached the preposterous notion that had come to him by the rabbit-hutch.

"I was thinking," he said, "that money's a poor thing after all, if one can't manage to do a bit o' good with it, to others as well as oneself. And I don't mind owning, too, that it made me feel very mean and small when M. banged out about never having had a thought for herself, but only glad to think that the money would bring us pleasure and comfort. Hold on," he said, hurriedly and deprecatingly. "I'm not judging your wisdom, or your knowledge of what's befitting. No, my dear, you've been right all along. But then I thought of your own remark, that we'd let her grow more like a daughter to us than a servant. Well, there's the point," and he hesitated, and cleared his throat. "M.'s become impossible as a servant—but why shouldn't we adopt her as a daughter? We've none of our own; we're getting old; we're going to be very lonely before we've done."

To his astonished delight Mrs. Crane leaped at the suggestion. She said that the very same idea had slowly formed itself in her own mind, but she had not dared mention it.

A minute later she brought down M. huddled in an ulster; and they sat her on the edge of the bed between them, each holding one of her hands while they told her the fresh scheme and implored her to believe that they would be heart-broken if she refused to let them carry it out. She believed at last; but not till she had almost reduced them to despair by her fine determination "not to trade on their compassionate kindness." When she did finally believe that they really and truly wanted her and could not get on without her, she hugged them both and wept for joy.

But she was singing on the stairs next morning. "Ah, that sounds better," said Mr. Crane; and he sat up in bed listening to the music to which he had so long been accustomed.

SPEAKING of the adoption years afterwards, he said, "It may have seemed a bit hasty and foolish at the time; but it has proved the wisest thing we ever did."

WHAT A TONGUE!

The Convolvulus Hawk-Moth's Wonderful Sucking-Trunk.

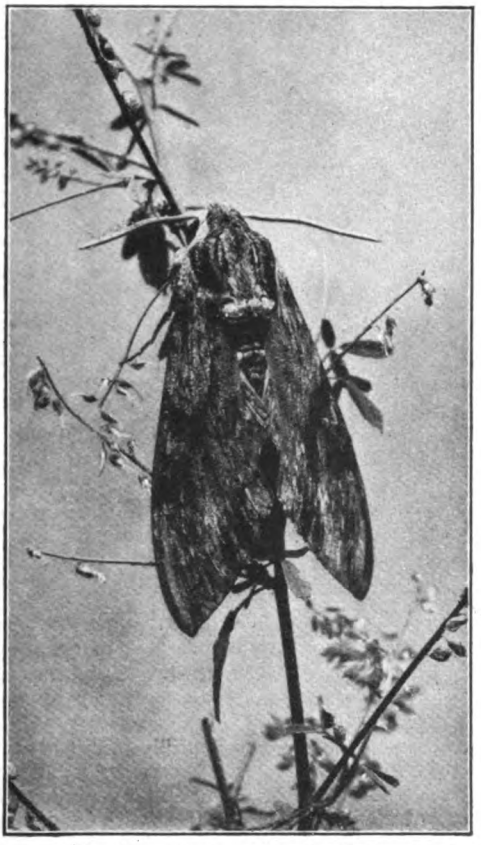
by

JOHN J. WARD F.E.S.

Illustrated with photographs by the Author.

STRANGE though it may seem, it is when night falls that the air becomes more and more crowded with beautiful flying insects. When we remember that in the British Isles we have only between sixty and seventy species of native butterflies which fly in the sunlight, and that there are upwards of two thousand night-flying moths, it is easy to realize that the night fauna of these insects is enormously greater than that of the day.

Many of these moths are considerably larger than even our largest butterfly species, and, not infrequently, they are more beautifully coloured. Some of them possess a very powerful flight, travelling with astonishing rapidity. The common Tiger-Moth, or Garden Tiger, as it is sometimes called, which always appears such a sluggish and drowsy insect when found in the day-time, at night flies at a tremendous pace. Yet, on account of their nocturnal habits, these insects are rarely seen by the lay individual. Specimens are frequently brought to me during the summer months by people who have discovered them resting during the day, and who think they have made a remarkable find. They are quite surprised to learn that they are common insects of the night.



1.—The Convolvulus Hawk-Moth, which flies to England from abroad. It is shown here at natural size.

When in the evening in your garden some of the white flowers, and others of pale hues, such as primrose yellow, pale pink, etc., begin to give out strong sweet perfumes, it is then that the signal is given to the night-flying moths that it is time to be up and doing.

Many flowers lay themselves out almost exclusively for moth visitors, and such flowers are generally white or pale-coloured, so as to make them visible in the night light. The common honeysuckle does not begin to emit its fragrance in real earnest until after 6 p.m.; when those of its light-coloured flowers which are ripe for pollination rapidly turn down into positions easy of access to the large and swiftly-flying hawk-moths, which sip the nectar from their depths while poised on rapidly-vibrating wings, darting from flower to flower like shadows, scarcely ever alighting, for such flowers do not provide a landing-stage for them.

In photograph Fig. 1 is shown the beautiful Convolvulus Hawk-Moth, an insect of migratory habits, generally flying to this country from abroad and landing on our coasts more often in the autumn months, occasionally penetrating far inland. The example shown

reached Coventry, so that it had travelled practically to the centre of England in its flight. The invasions of this species are somewhat uncertain; some years it is scarcely recorded at all.

Its speed of flight is enormous, and, not infrequently, it is attracted by electric arc-lights on the outskirts of towns, around which its movements are so rapid that it practically becomes invisible, although its black shadow seen on the ground as it darts beneath the light is much more readily distinguished. One morning a man brought to me a specimen of this moth, and when I saw it I said to him: "I can tell you where you caught that fellow, my good man." "I should be very much surprised if you could. I found that moth in a very peculiar place," he replied. I then informed him that he found it resting on a wall at the top of a certain street, which I named. The man was dumbfounded, for that was exactly where he had discovered it.

The explanation was very simple. On the previous night I was returning home from a midnight train, and while passing beneath an arc-light at the top of the street I named to him, my attention was suddenly attracted by a darting shadow on the ground. I immediately looked up at the light, but saw nothing to cause the shadow. I then began to think what it could have been, and, being late October, I concluded that it must have been a Convolvulus Hawk-Moth. My visitor appearing the following morning with one of these insects, and as I knew it was a rare visitor, and that two specimens so far inland would be unlikely, I guessed that the insect had become dazed by the brilliant light and had alighted on the wall to rest near the lamp standard. My surmise proved correct, for doubtless it was the moth whose shadow I had seen the previous evening. Hence, a little knowledge of natural history can, on occasion, make one a veritable Sherlock Holmes.

2.—A unique photograph of the Moth extending its remarkable sucking-tongue, which is about twice the length of its body.

In Fig. 2 is what is probably a unique photograph of this moth. It is shown in the act of extending its remarkable proboscis, or sucking-tongue, into the air amongst the flowers. It will be seen that it is about twice the length of its body; and the question which naturally arises is: Why does the moth need so long a tongue ?

That is a really wonderful story of evolution, for its proboscis has kept pace with the length of the floral tubes at which the moth seeks refreshment. As the flowers produced longer and longer tubes to protect the nectar at their bases from the reach of undesirable insects which did not assist in their effective pollination, so the invited guests (the hawk-moths) extended their tongues more and more to reach the sweet fluid; thus a reciprocal development of the floral tubes and the moths' proboscides was brought about.

Look at the next flower of the Tobacco Plant (*Nicotiana affinis*) which you see in your garden opening its white petals towards eight o'clock in the evening and emitting its powerful scent, and carefully observe the two inches of tube between the mouth and base of the flower, and there you have the whole story.

The moth follows up the scent until it sees the white petals, and over them, while poised on its powerful wings, it uncoils its proboscis and darts the tip of it into the remote depths of the flower in search of the honey fluid it contains, and an instant later it rises and

3.—The Moth recoiling its sucking-tongue.

withdraws it, only to descend again and plunge it into the next nearest bloom. It can, of course, also sip nectar from shorter tubes, as in the case of those of the honeysuckle; but the tobacco plant has specialized, as it were, on this particular type of insect for its fertilization—a highly-evolved tactic, for the extermination of the insect would probably mean the extinction of the plant also.

The moth's sucking-trunk is not the simple tube it appears to be; it is, indeed, a most complex piece of mechanism, consisting of a pair of flexible pipes laid side by side and grooved on their inner surface, being interlocked with minute hairs to form an air-tight tube through which the floral sweets are absorbed. Should a particle of non-fluid material pass up the tube, the moth can readily separate the two air-pipes and so remove the obstacle. The whole mechanism is a marvellously-constructed suction-pump.

As shown in the photographs Figs. 3 and 4, the tongue can be quickly coiled up and put safely away beneath the lower part of the head, and the photographs show clearly the moth changing its position on the branches so as to enable it to clear its proboscis of the stems and leaves while recoiling it. I was also able to make a moving-picture film of the moth extending and recoiling its tongue in this manner, and from the amount of film run off I was able to calculate that the uncoiling, waving in the air three or four times, and recoiling occupied about seven seconds of time.

The Convolvulus Hawk-Moth presents the most interesting British example of a moth with a really long sucking-proboscis, but, in warmer countries, still more wonderful examples occur. Charles Darwin had some flowers of a Madagascar orchid sent to

4.—It has now withdrawn its tongue, which, when coiled up, fits into the lower part of its head.

him with whip-like nectaries of eleven and a half inches long, with nectar in only their lower inch and a half, and he ventured the opinion that there must be moths with proboscides between ten and eleven inches in length to reach that nectar. The suggestion was ridiculed by some entomologists, but, later on, Fritz Müller recorded a moth from South Brazil with a proboscis which (even in the dried specimen) measured between ten and eleven inches and formed a coil of twenty or more windings.

Some ten kinds of hawk-moths are found in the British Isles, some of which, as the Privet, Lime, and Poplar Hawk-Moths, are quite common species. The Death's-Head is one of rarer kinds, and a migrant like the Convolvulus Hawk-Moth, but, unlike it, is remarkable for its short tongue.

Here is another of Mr. Barry Pain's stories containing mistakes—mistakes of facts, contradictions of one passage by another, and so forth—put in purposely to test the reader's ingenuity. There are seventeen such mistakes; read the story carefully and see how many of them you can detect. The solutions will be given next month.

A TALE WITH TANGLES IN IT

by

BARRY PAIN

ILLUSTRATED BY A. DEWAR MILLS

I.

NOBODY who happened to meet that prosperous specialist, Sir Andrew Portlinnock, M.D., of Harley Street, would have imagined that he had once been a romantic boy. He seemed now a scientific machine, slightly grim and dour, and interested in little beyond his work.

Yet in his boyhood he had been romantic enough. In his Highland home he had sat up the half of a summer night listening to the song of the nightingale, the bird that sings only in the darkness. He had even rendered into poetry—by no means despicable poetry, all things considered—the witchery of that music. He had fallen in love a score of times, and more poetry had been precipitated. His most serious attachment occurred when he was a student at Edinburgh. She was his tobacconist's daughter, just sixteen years of age, and had both beauty and intelligence.

But already Science, a jealous mistress, had called him. There was no time for poetry, and poetry went. There was no time for the beautiful daughter of the tobacconist—besides, she caused mind-wandering during lectures—and she also went. He explained it all to her, bought his tobacco at a different shop, and practised mental concentration. He was a brilliant student, and a veritable glutton for work. The wise foresaw that he would have a career, and he had it. But it seemed that romance had died out of him.

At one time he had been fond of various sports and pastimes, but recreations soon went the way of romance. He had played bridge at his club one night every week. But soon he discovered that overmastering hands annoyed him, whichever side held them. They made the thing too easy to be interesting.

One night there was dealt to him in the rubber game a hand that comprised three aces, all the kings, a queen, and two knaves. His declaration of no trumps was not contested, and his partner put him down the ace and queen of clubs. Andrew sighed wearily, and was asked what he was looking so glum about. With patient resignation he made the small slam—he would have had the grand slam if the ace-queen finesse had succeeded in his dummy hand—gathered up his winnings, retired from the table, and gave up bridge. He preferred something that was never too easy, and his profession supplied it.

He was a scratch man at golf, and golf survived rather longer. It was not until he began his famous book on his special subject that golf was accused of taking up far too much time, and was banished. His patients, his hospital, and his book needed all the time there was.

He had an excellent motor-car now, and a good driver, and he rarely walked when he could be carried. The car was an approved time-saver. He had reached the point when he took no exercise, though he knew well that exercise was essential for him. Like some other doctors, he could give advice much better than he could take it.

A warning note reached him from a tailor with a tape-measure. The good man put it as delicately as possible, but under the euphemism lay the cold fact—Andrew had increased two inches in waist-measurement. It was a disquieting fact for a man who was not yet forty. The tendency to fat was not unknown in the Portlinnock family. In the church of Andrew's native village a brass

tablet, old and rusted, recorded the many virtues of Andrew's great-uncle who was buried beneath it; but it was also recorded in the family that that great-uncle had weighed twenty-two stone, though memorial tablets gracefully ignore such things. There was a kit-cat portrait of Andrew's great-uncle, in a heavy carved frame, hanging in the library; and Andrew could understand why his great-uncle preferred to sit simply for the head and shoulders. Was he himself also to be enormous and ridiculous? It was a horrifying thought. Something must be done.

Diet, of course, would require attention. But Andrew was by no means averse to the pleasures of the table, and was not inclined to over-emphasize this point. Exercise was important. He wondered if it would be possible to take up golf again. Walking exercise, at any rate, might be arranged. He stretched out his hand and picked up his appointment diary. He glanced at the entry for the following day.

The diary informed him in cold print that the next day was quarter-day. Then in his secretary's neat handwriting he read that his first appointment was at a big house in Wimbledon at 9 a.m. It was too early for him to walk there, and he could not walk back because his next appointment was in his Harley Street consulting-room at 10 a.m. And from ten onwards his entire day was filled; even after dinner he had a paper to read before a certain learned society. And many other days were equally crowded. It was not easy to arrange.

But an increase of two inches in waist-measurement! Sir Andrew denied himself his customary glass of port after his solitary dinner that night. He dictated half-a-dozen letters to his secretary, and the combination of his liver and her inaccuracy made him lose his temper with her. He then retired to his library to work for a couple of hours on the last chapter of that famous book.

But that night he found mental concentration impossible. He gave up work, flung himself into an easy chair, lit his pipe, and began to review the situation.

What was he doing it all for?

He had started life with a fine constitution, and he was quite aware that he was not giving it fair treatment. He had had many good friends, and his neglect of them had tried them sore. One man had said bitterly that the only way to see Andy Portlinnock nowadays was to make an appointment for a consultation. Of his own choice he lived alone and without the pleasures natural to his age. What was he doing it for?

He swore softly as the ash of his cigarette dropped on his trousers.

He was not doing it for money. There he could acquit himself absolutely. He was neither avaricious nor extravagant, and for years past had not spent the half of his income. He felt that he could not flatter himself that he was sacrificing himself to a love of humanity. The idea that he was a martyr to science seemed at first comforting and more plausible. But did martyrs have an increased waist-measurement?

So he reached the distressing conviction that he had mismanaged his life and acted unreasonably. Still he was not old yet, and could make a fresh start. But how?

As it happened the next day provided the answer to the question.

II.

MR. IVAN HAMER was a wealthy man and a strict Jew, careful and conscientious in his observance of his religion. He was devoted to his wife and family. He was not slothful in business. He did not gamble, had never tasted wine in his life, and had no serious vices.

But his nerves were not of the strongest. He was a little too fond of reading out-of-date medical works by doubtful authorities, and forming theories based on the parts that he thought he understood. It is not a good pastime for a hypochondriac, but hypochondriacs are often addicted to it.

At present he was convinced that he was very ill. He had diagnosed a complication of two different diseases. As he was suffering from neither of them, his diagnosis differed from that of his regular medical attendant, Dr. Whiston. And as a natural consequence his confidence in Dr. Whiston became shaken. He confided to his wife that the man simply did not understand the case. He was not much better pleased with his nurse. She was attentive enough, but she obviously did not see how serious the thing was. She was always smiling.

However, the great Sir Andrew Portlinnock was coming at nine. He would really know. His verdict would be final. Mr. Hamer was prepared to receive it with calm and resignation, merely requesting him to break the sad news to the family as gently as possible.

Sir Andrew was punctual. He realized almost at once that he had been brought to Wimbledon for very little, but he made a careful and thorough examination as usual. He gave the patient some sound advice, but his principal business was to restore Mr. Hamer's spirits and to banish his fears. And in this his authority made him successful.

"It's a funny thing, Sir Andrew," said Mr. Hamer, "but what you tell me is just what Dr. Whiston told me."

"I can quite believe it," said Sir Andrew, dryly.

"You know, I thought he was right myself," lied Mr. Hamer, "but I like to have the very best opinion also, because—well, my wife is a little anxious."

Downstairs, Sir Andrew quickly dispersed any anxiety that Mrs. Hamer felt. He also had a few minutes' talk with Dr. Whiston, partly about the patient, but rather more about the Test-match. And then at last his duty was done, and he could set his mind free for another matter.

On entering his patient's room that morning he had given the nurse one glance and a word of curt salutation. That was all. But in that one glance he had recognized her, and the recognition filled him with pleasurable excitement.

Alone in the library now, he rang and asked that the nurse might be sent to him.

The nurse looked very shy as she entered. Andrew himself had scarcely his usual self-possession, but he was the first to speak.

"You'll be Jean Minster, I'm thinking."

"Yes, Sir Andrew. I did not know you'd recognized me."

"You're not much changed. You remember the old days—Edinburgh?"

"I remember well."

"We were Jean and Andrew to one another then."

"We were very young," she said, flushing slightly.

"Aye, we were young—and you're young still. And I was a fool, Jean—a poor fool."

"It was a short-lived folly," she said, with rather a wan smile. "You soon saw that your work needed all your time, all your energy, all——"

"And all my heart. And that was when I was a fool—just when I thought myself wise. I was a fool to let you go, and never deserved to find you again. But I have found you, and I am a fool no longer. I must see you again. I'll send my car for you at seven to-night, if you can get away then. We'll dine together quietly at my house in Harley Street, and talk over old days. You'll come?"

"I might be ready at seven. There is so little for me to do here professionally."

"Mighty little. To be candid, our patient is a timid, spoiled rich man, not seriously ill. He does not need a nurse, and should get up, and I've told him so. I'm sending him for a holiday by the sea in a day or two. You'll come, then, Jean?"

"Thank you, Sir Andrew. I should like to come very much."

They shook hands and parted. Jean went upstairs to her patient again.

"I'm afraid, nurse," said Mr. Hamer, dolefully, "that as an invalid I'm rather a fraud."

His nurse most cheerfully agreed with him.

"Well, well," he continued, "there's something about Sir Andrew. Simply to talk to him seems to do you good."

"Naturally," said Jean.

"I'm to take a holiday by the sea. We're in July now, and it might be pleasant. I think I'll 'phone an hotel when I've got up. Yes, and he says I don't need a nurse."

"Well," said Jean, pleasantly, "I think there are plenty of people who need me much more."

And no doubt many people did need her much more: amongst them was Sir Andrew Portlinnock.

III.

SIR ANDREW thought much of Jean on his way back. His romantic youth had come back to him in a wave, and he had not a moment's doubt of his desire and intention to marry Jean. But there were other doubts in his mind. Jean was still beautiful, and still seemed young. What possible attraction could he have for her—a man in his forty-first year, with an expanding waist and hair that was already touched with grey? Besides, he had not treated her well in the past. In that respect he had accused himself of folly, and he saw it now as the folly of cowardice and selfishness. She was a generous soul—not the type that loves to take offence. She was coming to dine with him. She seemed willing to be his friend again. But would she marry him? Was it not easily possible that she was already married or engaged?

In his consulting-room his work absorbed him, but at luncheon his thoughts went swiftly back to Jean again. He interviewed his housekeeper, and drastically revised his dinner menu, making it a little more elaborate and much more feminine. The bright thought came to him that when his car went to fetch her he might send her flowers by it. He was unable to accompany them, but, at any rate, he had all the rest of the evening free. He would be able to take her back at night.

Points of view differ. We may think poisonous serpents a mistake, but no doubt the cobra and boa regard their venom as evidence of the kindly wisdom of Providence. Man and woman rarely realize each other's point of view. Sir Andrew had no idea of Jean's view of the situation.

And yet it was simple enough. Jean was one of the women who love once and for ever. Even in darkness and solitude her love, like some stalactite on the floor of a

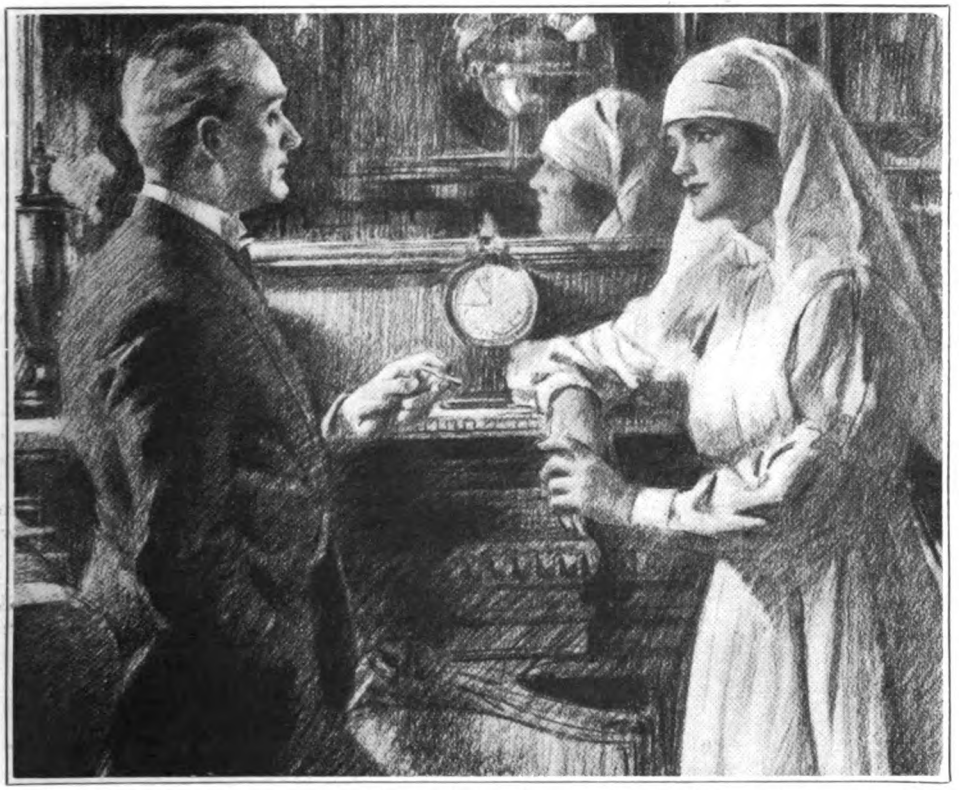
cavern, had gone on growing upwards. Her nature decided it, and she was quite calm about it. When, as a student, Andrew had told her that for a long time they must not even communicate, that he must give himself solely to his work, but that they must meet again when success came, she had accepted it, content to wait if so she might best help him.

Soon after this her father, the tobacconist, died. He had been a good, thrifty, far-seeing tobacconist, and he left behind him much more money than his friends had expected. Jean was now alone in the world. Her trustees were ready to advise her, and did. When they had finished, Jean said: "The first thing is to get more education."

The trustees approved. Jean could be practical as well as romantic. Poetry and prose are inextricably mixed in this world, and a table of weights takes its name direct from the Troy of the ancient poets.

For over a year she worked hard and with great good will at improvements in her general education, and then she decided to become a nurse, and began her training.

She was well fitted for the profession, being strong, patient, and intelligent. It gave her pleasure to feel that she was helpful. But another thought was also in her mind—that she would be entering a field whither in another capacity her lover had preceded her. She would be enough in touch with him to watch his steps upwards, even if he were unaware of it. Later she foresaw that it was not absolutely impossible that one day she might be employed as a nurse in a case where her lover, now the great Sir Andrew Maclinnock, would be called in. She had watched those upward steps without criticism and without doubt that one day he would come to her. "He just has ambition," she told herself, "and I'm not entirely without it myself."



"'I was a fool to let you go,' he said, 'and never deserved to find you again.'"

Her one moment of doubt came when, at the house of Mr. Hamer, he had seemed at first not to recognize her, and that was soon dispelled. True, she had spoken of their love as a short-lived folly, but being a woman she was not without ruse; that phrase had been merely provocative.

So while Sir Andrew was wondering if he would ever be forgiven and could ever

regain her love, he had never lost it, and she was unconscious that she had anything to forgive. It was better fortune than he deserved? Doubtless, but love comes often to those who do nothing to earn it, and is denied to those who do much. As she drove to his house, where she had never been in her life before, she had much of the feeling of a tired child who gets home at last.

At dinner they talked of the old Edinburgh days, and long before dinner was over she was finding it quite easy to call him Andrew again without any prefix. Then she spoke of his career, and it was a subject that she knew thoroughly. She knew every step in it, every prize that he had gained, every honour that he had won—yes, and the dates thereof.

"Jean," said Andrew, in wonderment, "you know more about me than any living being. You know things that I myself had most forgotten."

As they crossed the hall to the library, Jean espied a white cat trekking for the basement, and spoke of it.

"Aye," said Andrew, as he lit her cigarette for her, "he's a fraud, that cat is, in spite of his blue eyes and sweet expression. I bought him for company, for I've been a mighty lonely man. At first he seemed to take to me. I had but to open the door and call him, and he'd hear me and come running in. Then the black thought came to me that it was always at lunch or dinner that I called him, and that I always gave him food. So I tried the experiment of calling him and giving him nothing. Three days of it were enough. Now he lives in the kitchen, and when we chance to meet he pretends he doesn't know me. He's left me to my loneliness."

Now when a man and a woman who love one another get on to the subject of loneliness, a certain result is quite probable, and in this case it actually happened.

A fortnight later, Mr. Hamer, taking a holiday at Bath, whither the great Sir Andrew had sent him, read an announcement in the *Morning Post* that caused him to say "Fancy that!" quite a number of times. He added that he had never had the remotest idea that anything of the kind was under way. She was an excellent nurse, and Sir Andrew had done wonders for him, and he really must mark the occasion. He marked it expensively.

At present Sir Andrew can think of the inscription on his great-uncle's cenotaph without disquiet. Lady Portlinnock is very fond of golf, and is improving rapidly under her husband's tuition. Andrew finds that there is much more time for exercise of this kind now than there used to be. And in consequence his tailor has been most reassuring.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 100.

'Tis the same number, though two words are here,
Marking a certain stage in our career.

1. Telling of one, of whom the truth this is:
   His is one part, while many parts are his.
2. A poet's word refers to Gentile might.
   But one must rearrange to get it right.
3. Take war-famed hill; two-thirds a king will show;
   This tells the race he governed, years ago.
4. Milliner's daughter—this her married name—
   Using a man's name earned a meed of fame.
5. Cardinal, Duke, through many a change and chance
   Sternly controlled the destinies of France.
6. To find the place, think of a woman wise,
   A broken law, a monarch in disguise.
7. Where four comes after eight, and later three,
   And Whitsuntide comes after Trinity.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 100 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, The Strand Magazine, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on November 9th.

Two answers may be sent to every light.

It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 99.

The proverb says, and so it must be true,
That folk who live in *one* ought not to *two*.

1. A noble knight, in good King Arthur's days.
2. This longer word means much the same as maze.
3. Son of a king, by wicked uncle slain.
4. A dry dust-laden wind blows o'er the main.
5. A little creature, tamed in famous play.
6. Alone he kept the bridge, in famous lay.
7. Consult him, should your sight begin to fail.
8. The sheep, when dead, can spare both head and tail.
9. Princes see first. It is the last but one.
10. Mother will tell us that the day is done.
11. Make silver taste? What can is quickly traced.
    But who composed what can make silver taste?

PAX.

1.	G	erain	T
2.	L	abyrint	H
3.	A	rthu	R
4.	S	irocc	O
5.	S	hre	W
6.	H	oratiu	S
7.	O	culis	T
8.	U	tt	O
9.	S	chi	N
10.	E	v	E
11.	S	ibeliu	S

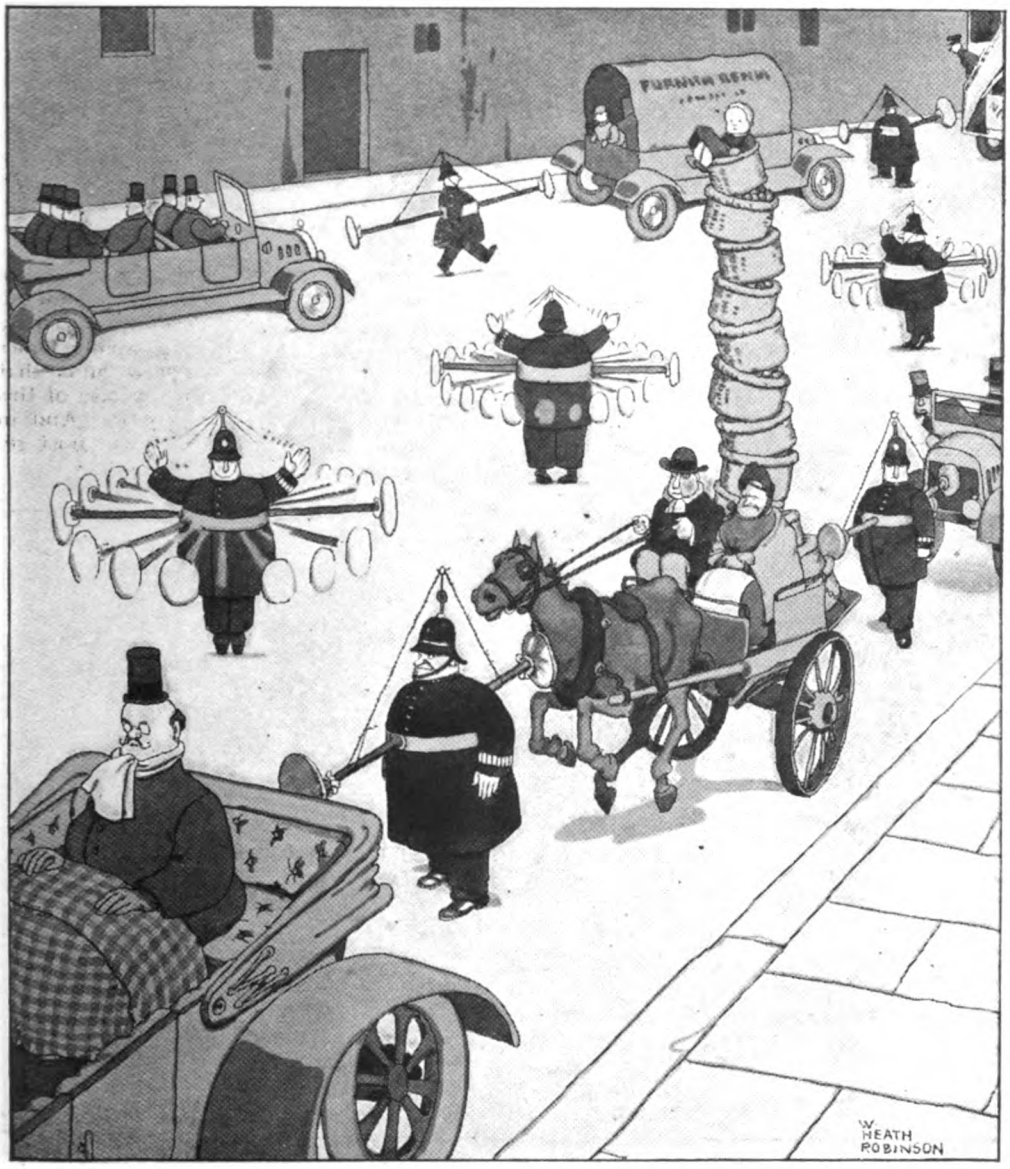
Notes.—Light 3. Nephew of King John. 5. Shakespeare. 6. Macaulay. 8. Mutton. 9. Psalm 119, the last section but one; the first word is "Princes." 11. Silver taste, *Valse triste*, anagrams. Sibelius composed *Valse triste*.

"Rotor" is accepted for the eighth light of No. 97.

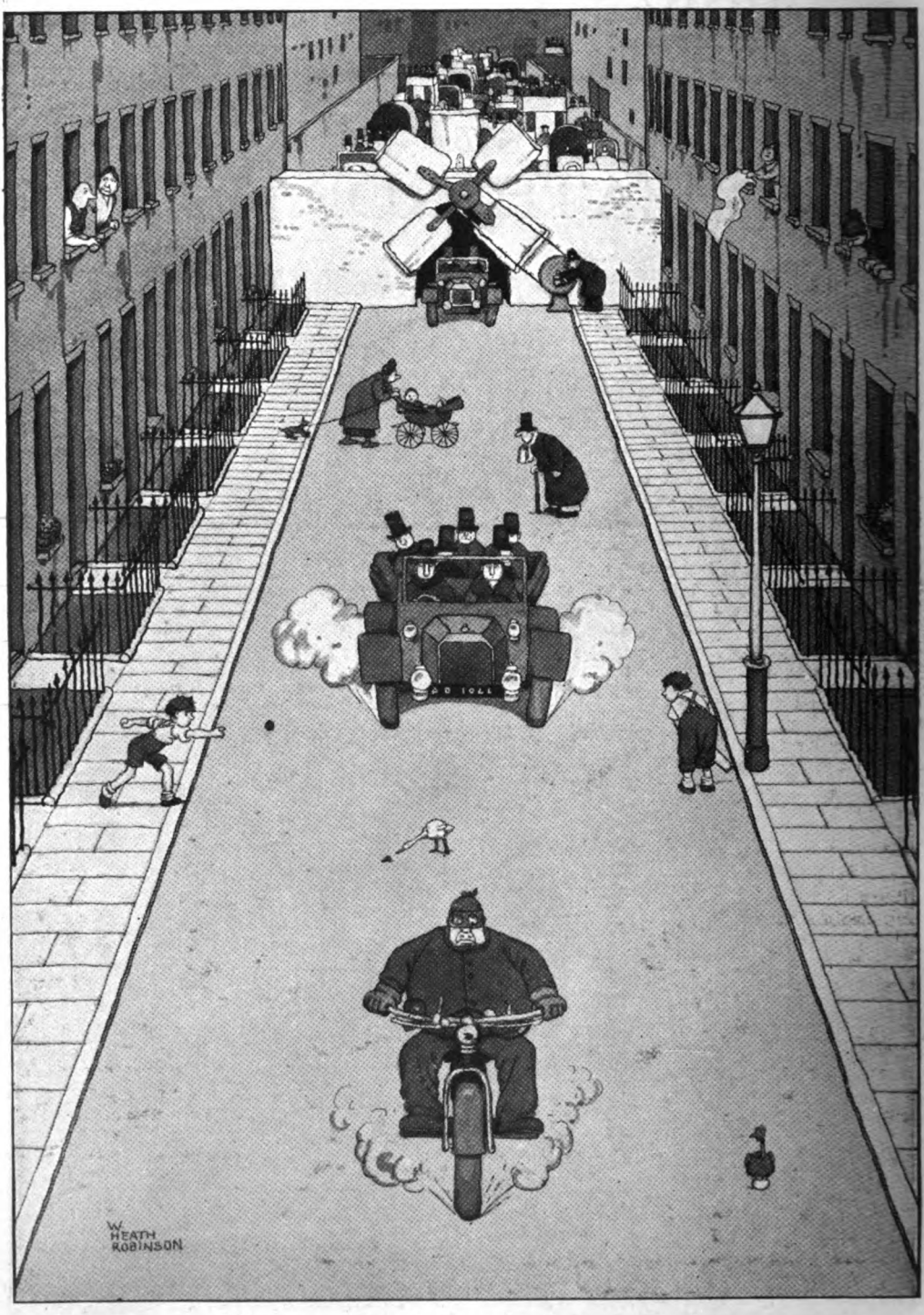
HOW I WOULD SOLVE THE TRAFFIC PROBLEM.

By

W. HEATH ROBINSON.

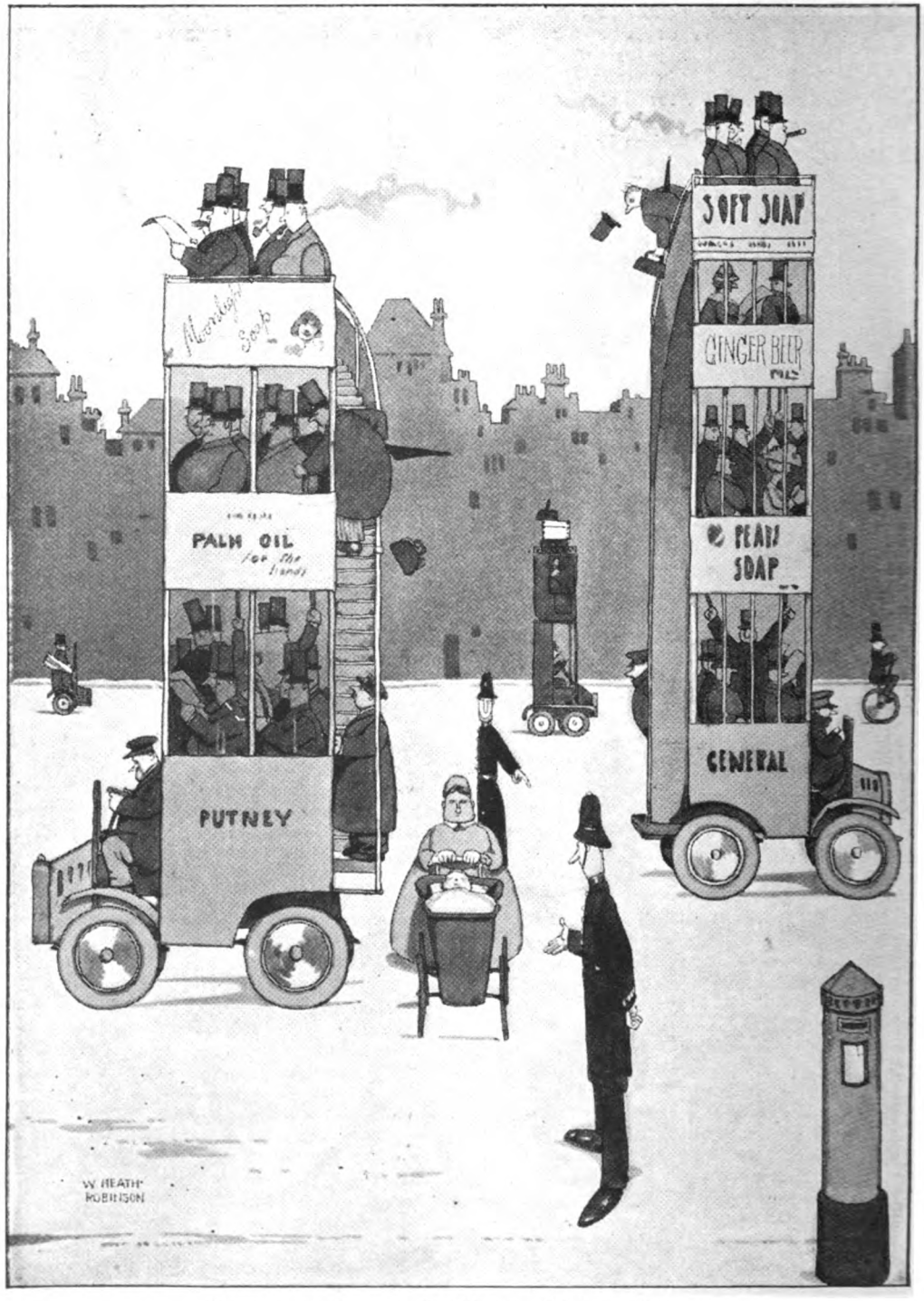


A simple scheme for avoiding traffic congestion during busy times of the day.



The one-at-a-time lock on the Brompton Road.

Dealing with a deadlock—drawing lots as to which road should back out first.



Some suggestions for doubling available road space.

The TENTACLE

by CLARENCE MEILY

ILLUSTRATED BY S SEYMOUR LUCAS

SHORTLY after two o'clock on a crisp afternoon in late October the telephone in the reception-room of Messrs. Weismann and Burk rang out its staccato summons. Miss Collins, the office-girl, who had been employed less than a week, placed the receiver to her ear and heard a woman's voice ask for Mr. Burk. It was a peculiar voice, unusually deep for a woman—an "oratorical voice," Miss Collins afterwards called it.

By mistake, Miss Collins pressed the button that sounded the call-bell in Mr. Weismann's private room, and she heard through the telephone his answering "Hallo!"

"It's for Mr. Burk, Mr. Weismann. My mistake," Miss Collins said through the telephone, being considerably flustered by her error.

Simultaneously she pressed the button connecting with Mr. Burk's room, which opened from the opposite side of the reception-room. Mr. Burk answered, but Miss Collins, being still nervous from her blunder, continued to listen, to assure herself that the connection was perfect. In this way she overheard the following conversation:—

"Mr. Burk?"

"Yes, this is Mr. Burk."

"This is Adelaide, Mr. Burk."

"Oh, yes!"

"I have an investment for you—something extra fine."

"How much does it involve?"

"Fifteen hundred."

"That's a good deal of money."

"You won't say so when you see them. It isn't half price."

"All right. We'll talk over the transaction this evening."

"What time?"

"Eleven o'clock."

"The usual place?"

"Yes."

"Very well, Mr. Burk, I'll be there on time. Good-bye!"

There was the click of a restored receiver, and Miss Collins, blushing violently at the realization that she had been eavesdropping, hung up her own receiver just in time to escape the notice of Mr. Burk, who emerged from his room and passed out into the corridor.

Mr. Burk did not return to the office. As subsequently developed, he visited his bank, where he drew fifteen hundred dollars in cash. He then attended a directors' meeting, which occupied him till five o'clock. He was believed to have dined in the city, and may have attended a motion-picture show, a form of entertainment of which he was fond. At all events, he was seen to enter the house where he had a bachelor's suite at about eight o'clock. He must have left the house later, however, for his bed remained unoccupied. He was not seen again alive.

Some two days later, Mr. Mellus, proprietor of the house where Mr. Burk resided, called at the office of the chief of police in a state of considerable anxiety. Mr. Burk's prolonged absence had disturbed him greatly. Never before, in the course of his ten years' residence with Mr. Mellus, had Burk indulged in so extended and unexplained an absence. Always before, if he left town for a day—which rarely happened, his habits being of the most regular sort—he had left a message for his landlord, and usually an address. Mr. Mellus had communicated with his lodger's office and found that he had not been seen there, nor was his whereabouts known. This had added to the caller's uneasiness. He was persuaded that the affair had become one for the police.

Questioned more particularly as to the character and interests of the missing man, Mr. Mellus stated that he had known

Mr. Burk for something over ten years. Mr. Burk was a man of middle age, a bachelor, and without relatives, so far as Mr. Mellus knew, or even intimate friends. His principal business was that of diamond-broker, and he was believed to possess considerable means. He had an office with a Mr. Frederick Weismann, an estate agent, but, as Mr. Mellus believed, there was no further business connection between them.

Weismann, Mr. Mellus understood, was a German, a chemical engineer by profession, who had lost his position in consequence of war-time prejudices, and had then undertaken a rather unsuccessful venture as an estate agent. Mr. Mellus believed that Mr. Burk had occasionally helped Weismann out with money and influence, but he did not think they could be called intimates. He himself was about as intimate an associate as Burk had had.

For a number of years Mr. Burk had been deeply interested in spiritualism, and he had a number of friends among mediums. Mr. Mellus, however, had not joined him in this pursuit, and his knowledge of Mr. Burk's spiritualistic researches was rather vague.

The case took the usual course in police circles, and was assigned for investigation to Detective Raymond, a veteran of the detective force. It was also mentioned at inspection the following morning. At this time, Lewis, a policeman, recalled that three nights before, while walking his beat in a remote residential district almost in the outskirts of the city, he had noticed a man, who might have answered Burk's description, entering the grounds of an isolated house, located well back from the street, not far from where the officer then stood.

The lateness of the hour and the fact that the house had long been vacant roused the curiosity of Lewis. He walked past the place and scrutinized it, and thought he saw indications of a light in some of the lower windows. Supposing that a tenant had at last taken the premises, he went on, and had rounded the next corner when he seemed to hear a muffled scream or cry from the direction of the house. This was followed immediately by the faint sound of running footsteps.

He returned hastily and made an examination of the place, but could find no trace of human presence or occupancy. All doors and windows were securely locked, there was no light anywhere, and there was every appearance of emptiness and even of desolation. Lewis had accordingly dismissed the incident from his mind, and recalled it now only because he had noticed on the lawn a printed sign giving the names of Weismann and Burk as agents for the property.

At Detective Raymond's suggestion, he and Lewis secured a key from Mr. Weismann's office and went to explore the vacant houses. It proved to be a modest structure of two storeys, showing marked evidence of disuse and growing dilapidation. The blinds of the lower windows were closely drawn.

They unlocked and entered the front door, and found themselves in a narrow, old-fashioned hall, extending towards the rear of the building. A stairway at the right led to the floor above. Immediately in front of the stairs, and also to the left, doors opened into ground-floor apartments. Notwithstanding the long lack of inhabitants, as shown by the thick dust and musty odours, it was evident that the place was fully furnished.

Detective Raymond tried the door at the right, and admitted himself into what appeared, in the ghostly twilight that filtered through the shaded windows, to be a drawing-room. Easy chairs stood about, and there were a couple of small tables, one of which bore a reading-lamp. To the left was a fireplace, with a grate containing the embers of a fire. The rear of the room was nearly closed by *portières*, which curtained the wide entrance to a room beyond.

A few feet in front of these *portières*, conspicuously and somewhat oddly placed with its back to the opening, stood a large leather chair, and on the floor in front of it, only dimly discernible in the obscurity, was a bulky, huddled, grotesque object. The policeman hastened to raise the blinds of a couple of the windows, and the two men stepped forward to examine this distorted shape. Raymond turned it over. It was the body of Burk, dead these three days.

IT is an axiom of criminal investigation that the more ordinary the motive, the less clue it affords to the perpetrator of a crime. In this case the motive was commonplace enough. Burk's body had been stripped of all money and valuables, the pockets rifled, his expensive jewellery taken; but in the grate the officers found his watch, which was of unique design, and the charred remnants of his pocket-book, evidently discarded by the thief or thieves. It being apparent that a robbery of magnitude had been committed, the case passed under the control of the district attorney, and the corpse was removed to the hospital for an autopsy to determine the cause of death.

It was a week later that Dr. Ward, the autopsy surgeon, entered the office of District Attorney Forsyth, bearing in his hand a typewritten report of his findings in the Burk *post-mortem*. He laid it on the district attorney's desk and sank into a seat with a frankly worried air.

"What did you find?" Forsyth asked.

The surgeon shook his head.

"Nothing," he said.

"He died a natural death, then?"

Dr. Ward leaned forward, pulling nervously at his moustache.

"I wish I knew," he said.

"You mean——"

"I mean there is no discoverable cause of death. He just died. That is all."

"But people don't just die!"

"I know that as well as you do. That's what worries me. If I go into the witness-box and swear to that, I shall make myself ridiculous; but what can I do?"

"There are no marks of violence?"

"I have been over the body almost with a microscope. There isn't a scratch or a bruise. There is no such congestion as would show suffocation. The vital organs were perfectly healthy. I even examined them for poison. Nothing doing! I never saw such a case."

"Heart failure?" suggested the district attorney, hopefully.

"His heart was the healthiest thing about him. I'm going to say he died of shock. I've got to say something."

"But a full-grown adult, in perfect vigour, couldn't very well be shocked to death. Do you mean you think he saw something? A ghost, perhaps?"

The district attorney was gently satirical.

"You needn't rub it in," said Dr. Ward, irritably. "I don't know what to think. If I did, I shouldn't be sitting here talking in this fashion. I suppose an utter, paralyzing fright might kill a man. Anyway, I'm going to say shock; but I warn you that if I'm cross-examined I shall have to confess the bald truth—that I don't know."

AT the same hour that Dr. Ward was making this admission to Forsyth, a client entered the office of Mr. Claude Ruggles, a young attorney formerly connected with the city prosecutor, but now developing a successful practice of his own, chiefly of a criminal nature.

The client was a youngish man, with a feline gaze and a sidelong, shifty manner of avoiding obstacles. He had a narrow face in which small eyes played furtively. His mouth wore an habitual smirk, as if he enjoyed a secret joke at the expense of the world at large. On being ushered into the private office, he stood obsequiously by Mr. Ruggles's desk and announced with an animated grin:—

"I've got a case for you, sir."

Ruggles glanced up in mild astonishment. He was familiar with this type of client, but he had expected a different and more tragic grievance.

"Sit down," he said. "Tell me the trouble."

The client seated himself gingerly on the edge of a chair, holding his hat in his hands. His beady gaze travelled in quick, appraising glances about the room.

"It's like this," he said. "There's a woman that owes me money. She owes me three thousand dollars. I want you to get it. If you collect it, you get half, see?"

"Who is the woman?"

"Adelaide."

"Adelaide what?"

"How should I know? Just Adelaide—Adelaide, the psychic marvel. Tells your name, age, where you come from, where you're going to, enemies, friends, past, and future, without asking a question. Readings one dollar, strictly in advance. Understand?"

"Fully. And how did she come to be owing you three thousand dollars?"

"Well, it's like this," said the client, his voice taking on a plaintive note. "I gives her these here sparklers, and she's to advance me twelve hundred on 'em, being not half what they're worth, see? And now I can't get any satisfaction. She don't give me either diamonds or money. I got my rights same as any man, ain't I?"

"So you want me to sue her?"

"Oh, no, nothing like that!" exclaimed the client, in sudden alarm. "Don't start anything like that. I don't want any court proceedings. She'll pay up without that."

"Oh, she will!" said Mr. Ruggles, meditatively. "What is your name?"

"You can call me Miller."

"Is Miller your name?"

"It's a good name, ain't it?" said the client, defensively. "A man's got a right to a name, ain't he?"

"All right. We'll call it Miller. And now, Mr. Miller, where did you get these diamonds?"

Mr. Miller was clearly pained by the crass impropriety of the question.

"What's that got to do with it?" he demanded, with heat. "I give her the stones all right, under agreement. She don't deny it, and she's got to account for 'em. You don't need to go into details."

"But suppose Adelaide insists on going into details?"

"Well, now, it's like this," Mr. Miller answered, with a return of his quaint humour. "She ain't going to want any details. You saw in the papers about this fellow Burk being found dead in an empty house, didn't you?"

Mr. Ruggles nodded.

"Well, you just mention Burk to her—not hinting at nothing, you understand, but just

"The client seated himself gingerly on the edge of a chair, holding his hat in his hands."

mention him. You won't have any trouble after that. She'll pay up all right."

"You think she had something to do with Burk's death?"

"I don't think nothing!" protested Mr. Miller, with renewed indignation. "I'm just telling you. You do it like I tell you, and you'll get the money. She'll pawn her own diamonds to get it, if necessary. And she's got some jewellery, too, believe me! That is, she has so far," he added, dreamily.

BEFORE addressing a letter to the psychic marvel requesting her to come to his office for an interview, Mr. Ruggles thought it wise to communicate an account of his queer client to Detective Raymond, of the city police force, with whom he had an old and valued friendship. As a result, Mr. Ruggles, though seemingly alone, was not in reality so when Adelaide visited him according to appointment a couple of days later.

She proved to be a large, handsomely-garbed woman of forty, with an imposing presence and considerable claims to a certain somnolent beauty.

"You wished to see me, sir?" she asked, and Ruggles noticed the musical, throaty timbre of her deep voice.

"If you please, madam. Will you be seated?"

She sat down and waited, watching the lawyer out of expressionless eyes.

"You are acquainted with a Mr. Miller, madam?"

"I presume I know the person you mean."

"He placed certain diamonds with you for sale."

She did not answer; merely waited.

"He has asked me to recover them."

"I haven't got his diamonds."

"The money, then."

"I haven't either diamonds or money. I have told the little wretch so a dozen times.

Those diamonds were stolen goods, if you want to know."

"I assumed so. What I want to ascertain now is whether they have been stolen a second time."

An angry flush rose under the woman's swarthy skin.

"You can spare your insinuations," she snapped. "The diamonds were lost. I don't know where they are."

"How were they lost?"

"I don't care to be questioned any further. If Miller thinks he has got anything against me, let him go ahead."

She rose to depart.

"Raymond!" Ruggles called, and Detective Raymond stood in the doorway.

The woman who called herself Adelaide turned a startled gaze from the detective to the lawyer. Then her lips, full and touched with carmine, curved into a sneer.

"Oh, a plant!" she said. "Well, go on with the show."

"Miss Collins!" Raymond called. "Will you please come here and see if you can identify this woman?"

Miss Collins's excited visage appeared over the detective's shoulder.

"It's her!" she cried. "I'd know that voice out of a thousand!"

"I never saw this young person before in my life," replied Adelaide.

"Let me introduce you," said Ruggles. "This is the late Mr. Burk's stenographer."

The effect of the lawyer's words was startling, almost spectacular. The clairvoyante's composure fell from her like a concealing cloak, leaving her emotions bare. She sank back into her seat with a hopeless gesture. Slowly her frightened, suffused eyes searched the faces in front of her.

"What do you want?" she asked, finally.

"The straight, absolute truth from you," Raymond said, gravely. "You took these stolen diamonds to sell to Burk, didn't you? Burk was a high-class receiver, wasn't he?"

"Yes," she said, sullenly.

"What were the diamonds? I want a description."

"Three rings, one a solitaire, one a ruby and three diamonds, the other a cluster round an opal; a bracelet of small pearls with a solitaire diamond clasp; a necklace of diamonds and sapphires in the design of a Greek cross, with a diamond pendant—that's all."

"You made this appointment with Burk, and he kept it. Then what happened?"

The woman suddenly covered her face with her gloved hands. A strangled sob, like the remnant of a half-assuaged terror, came from her.

"I don't know!" she cried. "As Heaven is my witness, I don't know!"

"Tell us what you saw," said Raymond, more gently.

She struggled a moment for control of her voice.

"I would have told it that night," she said, "if it hadn't been for the errand I was on, and because I knew nobody would believe it. I had nothing to do with it. I wouldn't have harmed a hair of his head. I thought a great deal of Mr. Burk—too much, I expect. I have been ill nearly ever since."

"Begin with your arrival at the house," Raymond suggested. "What did you see?"

"I got there just at eleven. The front door was unlocked. I went into the drawing-room.

"There was a fire in the grate; the blinds were drawn, and lights lit. I thought, of course, that Burk was there and had stepped out for a moment. I sat down, and presently he came in. He seemed surprised to see me.

"'What—you here already?' he said. 'How did you get in?'

"'The door was unlocked,' I told him.

"He didn't make any answer, though he looked puzzled. Then he said:—

"'Well, what have you got?'

"I took out the stones and showed them to him. He took them and sat down in a chair facing me—a chair that was standing just in front of the *portières*. There was a small table near, with a reading-lamp on it that gave a good light. The *portières* were close drawn. He began to look over the diamonds, taking out a magnifying-glass and looking them over the way experts do. Then something, I don't know——"

She was again in the grip of her feelings, struggling with mingled grief and fear. She buried her face in her hands, and it was some minutes before she could speak.

"Go on! What did you see?" Raymond demanded.

"Something came out from between the *portières*. I don't know what it was. It bent over his head, in front of his face. He looked up, kind of startled, and then he just slumped down in his chair, all limp and dead. I saw he was dead. Just in an instant he was dead. I couldn't move a muscle. Then I got my voice, and screamed, and ran. As I went down the steps I know the lights were turned out and everything was like the grave. I ran for some distance, and then I think I fainted. I don't know yet how I got home."

"And this thing that came out from between the *portières*—what was it like?"

"I can't describe it. I thought at first it was a snake, but I saw it had no head. It waved and curved around like the tentacle of a devil-fish. It seemed to play in front of his face. The whole thing happened in

an instant. I was so frightened I could hardly tell what I saw; and yet I can't get it out of my sight, either."

"What became of the jewels?" Raymond asked, after a moment's hesitation.

"He had them in his hands when he fell. They spilled over the carpet. If it was a robbery, as the papers say, I suppose they took them, too."

"Have you made any effort to recover them?"

"Me?" cried the woman. "I should say not!"

"You want this thing cleared up, don't you, and the murderers brought to justice?"

"I'll do anything I can," she declared.

"I think," Raymond said, after a little thought, "you had better advertise for the jewels. You will describe them carefully, and merely state that they are lost. You will offer to pay three thousand dollars in cash for their return, and no questions asked. It's only a chance, but it's worth trying. This is Saturday. An advertisement published in to-morrow morning's papers ought to bring results by Tuesday. You will report any answers you may get at once to me."

"Whatever you say," Adelaide agreed, with meekness.

"'Miss Collins!' Raymond called. 'Will you please come here and see if you can identify this woman?'"

AS Raymond had predicted, the advertisement for the lost gems bore fruit the following Tuesday. On the afternoon of that day the detective entered the office of his young friend Ruggles in a state of poorly-concealed excitement.

"I think we're on the track all right!" he declared. "Look at this. Adelaide brought it in an hour ago."

Ruggles took the envelope which the other held out. It bore the local postmark, and the address had been formed by the familiar expedient of cutting words and letters from a newspaper and pasting them on the envelope. The letter itself, on a piece of ordinary note-paper, had been similarly written. It was without introduction, and read:—

If you want your diamonds, bring the three thousand to 429 Larch Street at midnight Tuesday. Come alone. No tricks. Jewels will be there.

Ruggles looked up with a blank stare.

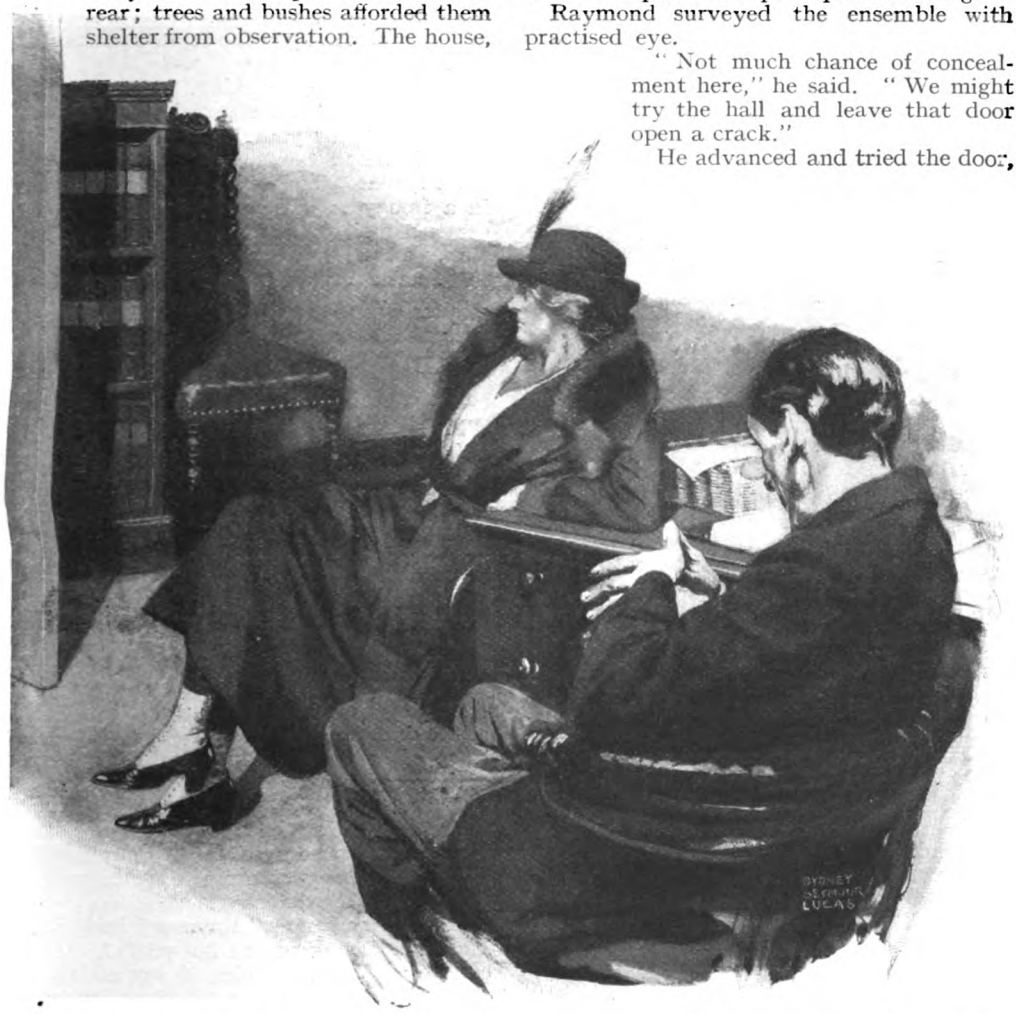
"Why, the incredible nerve!" he exclaimed. 'That's the house where Burk's body was found!"

"It does appear pretty cool," admitted the detective. "There is either something behind it that we don't understand, or else it's the work of amateurs who are lacking in criminal resource. Anyway, we'll find out to-night. Want to go along?"

"Wouldn't miss it for worlds!"

"Very well. Come to headquarters at eight. I'll post a cordon round the premises as soon as it's dark, and you and I will go inside and wait. Adelaide will be on hand at midnight."

THERE was a penetrating chill in the air, which caused the detective and his companion to shrink within their overcoats as they approached the house. They entered the premises from the rear; trees and bushes afforded them shelter from observation. The house, as they came near it, looked more ghostly and sinister than mere emptiness and decay seemed to justify. They circled the building warily and entered through the front door, the key to which Raymond had kept. They passed through the hall into the front drawing-room, where Burk had met his end.



Careful to avoid disturbing anything, Raymond, with his companion following, stepped through the still parted *portières* into the room beyond. They were then in a living-room, larger and more elaborately furnished than the other, but even more heavily mantled in dust and musty odours. Towards the farther end, a door opened in the direction of the hall. Opposite was a bay window hung with mildewed curtains. To right and left of this were bookcases, while at the farther end of the room stood a piano. A large library-table and numerous chairs completed the principal furnishings.

Raymond surveyed the ensemble with practised eye.

"Not much chance of concealment here," he said. "We might try the hall and leave that door open a crack."

He advanced and tried the door, which opened at his touch. He stepped back, alarmed.

"A cupboard!" he exclaimed. "Underneath the stairs. Why, the place is a regular cul-de-sac. The only exit is through that front room."

"There is another door behind that piano," Ruggles observed.

"So there is; but we can't disclose our presence by disturbing the furniture."

"How about the bay window?"

"No chance. We should be silhouetted against the glass. The windows go nearly to the floor. We'll have to take the risk of the cupboard, but I don't like it."

The detective continued to mutter protests

as he explored the interior of the cupboard, which was empty.

"What time is it?" he demanded.

"Nine o'clock," Ruggles answered.

"Three hours yet. Well, we might as well take our places. We don't know when they'll come."

They ensconced themselves in the cupboard, crouching together in the malodorous darkness. They talked for a time in whispers, then were silent. Time passed in an interminable monotony of hours. After what seemed a century, Raymond roused again and asked:—

"What time is it now?"

By the cautious glint of the flash-light Ruggles examined his watch.

"Just five minutes before midnight," he announced.

"Hush!" whispered Raymond, and they held their breaths.

There was a sound which indicated that a key was being fitted into the lock of the front door. A moment later they knew the door had been opened. There was muffled movement in the hall, followed by more distinct footsteps in the front room. They saw the glimmer of a match, and then once more came darkness and silence.

This was presently broken, however, by a renewed stir. Peering through the crack in the cupboard door over Raymond's shoulder, Ruggles could see a dim shape outlined in the opening of the *portières*. It moved forward, and the *portières* were gently drawn together, bringing again the effect of darkness. They could now hear steps and slight shiftings of furniture in the room. Arrangements of some sort seemed to be in progress. Ruggles thought he could detect the crinkling of paper, as of a package being handled or unwrapped.

Suddenly Raymond gripped his wrist with fingers that bit into the flesh. There were steps plainly audible, bold this time and undisguised, along the front porch.

"Adelaide!" breathed the detective, noiselessly, and at the same instant every item in the room in front of them burst into view as the electric lights overhead flared into bewildering brilliance.

THE next few moments seemed to Ruggles like an insane nightmare. He knew that Raymond, with a shout of warning that split the night, had hurled open the cupboard door and was half dragging, half carrying him in a mad leap across the room towards the bay window. He had a second's confused glimpse of a figure standing in front of the *portières*, with something partly concealed in wrapping-paper in its hands.

The shape turned at Raymond's shout, and Ruggles, even in that delirious instant, experienced a qualm of strange horror at seeing that the face was enveloped in a black and unnaturally protuberant mask. Then, amid a shower of splintered wood and shattered glass, they crashed through the window and fell upon the cement path underneath.

Raymond rose, shrieking.

"Adelaide!" he shouted. "Adelaide! Run! Run for your life! Get out of the house! Run!"

As if reason had quite left him, he began in a frenzy to gather broken pieces of the cement under their feet and hurl them through the lower windows of the house.

"Smash every window!" he cried to Ruggles, who began mechanically to imitate him.

Other figures loomed round them in the darkness—the officers whom Raymond had stationed around the place. One of these supported the hysterical and half-fainting figure of the clairvoyante. Having reduced all the windows in the two rooms to gaping holes, Raymond ceased his tempest of destruction and wiped his forehead.

"Stand back!" he ordered. "Stand well back and wait!"

They obeyed him, and waited in a stillness that contrasted oddly with the furore of the moment before. The gusty wind, which had swollen to almost a gale, swept through the swaying curtains and torn blinds of the demolished windows. Not a sound or trace of movement came from the interior of the rooms, where the garish lights continued to burn.

An eerie feeling that they had been attacking something intangible, something ghostly, beset the young attorney. He turned inquiringly to the detective.

"We'll try it now," Raymond said, drawing an automatic from his pocket. "You can go with me, Ruggles, if you are willing to take a chance. The rest of you stay out here and shoot if anybody tries to get out through the windows."

Followed by Ruggles, the detective returned to the front door and entered the house, holding his pistol ready for instant use. The two passed through the front room, and very cautiously Raymond parted the *portières* and peered between them. Then he stepped boldly forward. On the floor, face downward, beneath the streaming lights, lay the lifeless body of a man. Raymond bent and turned the face upward to the light.

"Weismann!" he gasped. "The man Burk shared offices with!"

Near the hand of the dead man lay the black gas-mask torn from his head, and

"Ruggles experienced a qualm of strange horror at seeing that the face was enveloped in a black and unnaturally protuberant mask."

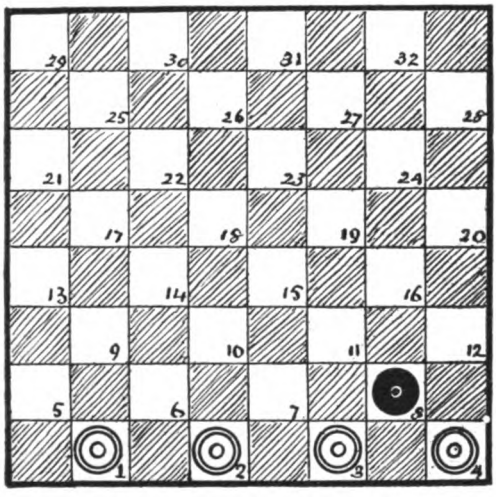
Close by was the devilish engine of murder, which, when trapped, he had turned upon himself. It consisted of a small, metallic gas-tank, fitted with a valve and nozzle to which was attached a section of rubber garden-hose, supported by a rod and manipulated by a cord fastened to its farther end.

In the freshened air there still lingered a faint odour suggestive of crushed peach-leaves.

PERPLEXITIES. By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

575.—FOX AND GEESE.

HERE is a little puzzle game that I used to play as a child, but in later life I have never met a single person who was acquainted with it. I think it is a modern simplification of an ancient game of the same name, which I will try to deal with later. It is played on the white squares of a draught-board. The player of the Geese places four white draughts, or pawns, on the squares 1, 2, 3, and 4, and the player of the Fox places his single black piece wherever he likes. They move



alternately and as in draughts (only there are no leaping moves or captures), and the object of the Fox is to break through and reach one of the squares 1, 2, 3, 4, and so win, while the Geese aim at winning by so driving and finally enclosing the Fox that he has no possible move.

I remember that when playing the Fox I generally placed him on square 8, as in the illustration. Suppose now that White plays 2 to 6, Black plays 8 to 11, and he cannot be stopped from breaking through, for, though Black is allowed to move backwards or forwards, White can only play forwards. Is it an even game? If not, which player should win—the one with the Fox or the one with the Geese?

576.—THE TWO TRAINS.

TWO railway trains, one 400ft. long and the other 200ft. long, ran on parallel rails. It was found that when they went in opposite directions they passed each other in five seconds, but when they ran in the same direction the faster train would pass the other in fifteen seconds. Now, a curious passenger worked out from these facts the rate per hour at which each train ran. Can the reader discover the correct answer? Of course each train ran with a uniform velocity.

577.—"SIMPLE" ARITHMETIC.

WHEN visiting a lunatic asylum, I asked two inmates to give me their ages. They did so, and then, to test their arithmetical powers, I asked them to add the two ages together. One gave me 44 as the answer, and the other gave 1,280. I immediately saw that the first had subtracted one age from the other, while the second person had multiplied them together. What were their ages?

578.—A CHARADE.

MY *first* is a butter ne'er seen on a plate;
My *second* a licker that naughty boys hate;
My *whole* is a charger, not quite out of date.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

571.—BUYING TOBACCO.

THE cigarettes must have cost 2s. 5d. and the tobacco 5s. 2d. The change from a ten-shilling note would thus be also 2s. 5d.

572.—ANOTHER VICTORIAN ENIGMA.

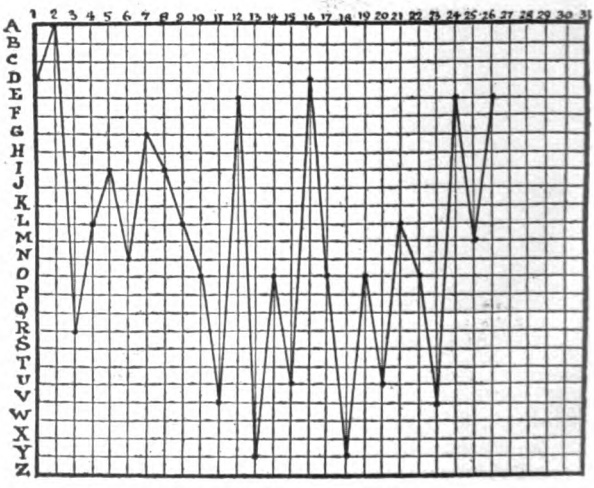
THE word WHOLESOME fulfils all the conditions, for if you successively cut off the head, the tail, both head and tail, and also remove the middle letter, you get HOLESOME, WHOLESOM, HOLESOM. and HOLSOM, all of which are "the same in sound." I admit that "wholesome" does not make much sense of "lest as me you would considered be," but I have not found any better word with the same peculiarities.

573.—FIND THE FACTORS.

THE factors of 1234567890 are $2 \times 3 \times 3 \times 5 \times 3607 \times 3803$. If we multiply 3607 by 10 and 3803 by 9 we get the two composite factors 36070 and 34227, which multiplied together produce 1234567890 and have the least possible difference between them.

574.—A SAD CASE OF NUR(S)ITIS.

IF you write in the letters of the alphabet, as shown in the diagram (and there being twenty-six horizontal



lines should have suggested this to the reader), the ends of the lines will be found to spell out, "Darling, I love you. Do you love me?"

"You *can't* possibly get wet in the

42/- "Mattamac" (Regd.)

Feather Weight Stormproof.

A "Mattamac" is identical in appearance with the usual five-guinea Weatherproof. In utility, also, it equals its much-more-costly Competitor. It wears as long, weighs one-third, and is absolutely waterproof. Though light and compact-folding, it is Wind and Chill proof as well as Wet proof, and can be used *additionally* as a light Overcoat for Driving, Motoring, etc., or for the colder evenings.

FOLDS INTO THIS SIZE.

Fits into the jacket pocket.

(Regd. Trade Mark.)

42/-

For Man, Woman, and Child. Made also for Riding, Sporting and Military Wear.

"Matta" Fabric is exceedingly compact. The Coat worn by the 6ft. man beneath when folded, just made this handful.

This is an actual photograph of his hand and the "Mattamac" he wears, folded to fit snugly into his jacket pocket.

WEIGHT 19 ozs.

You can carry a "Mattamac" as easily as a newspaper or umbrella. You can even fold it to fit into your jacket pocket, or Attaché Case, when the Sun shines. Yet it gives complete protection in the rainiest weather—at less than half the cost, and one-third the weight, of ordinary Weathercoats.

Illustrations show unbelted Models Nos. 1 and 2, at **42/-**, in Fawn, Olive, Tan, Grey, Black, or Blue Shades. Belted Models in the same range of colours, cost **47/6**. Children's Models in the six colours are made at size prices.

You *can* pay twice the price and get a Coat which does not look so well. You *cannot* get a more surely-protective Weathercoat at any price.

The "Mattamac"—
Unbelted, **42** (19 oz. weight).
Belted, **47/6** (21¼ oz. weight).

Model No. 1 **42/-** **Model No. 2**

MADE IN 11 MODELS, 6 SHADES, 40 SIZES.

Unbelted "Mattamacs" are made for Ladies and Gentlemen at **42/-**, and for Children at prices according to size. Conduit Street, their birthplace and the World's Overcoat centre, is represented in the graceful, tailored "hang," wide skirt, easy Raglan shoulders, and roomy "under-arms."

Each "Mattamac" has wind-strapped adjustable cuffs, perpendicular pockets, lined shoulders, is conscientiously finished in all details, and is guaranteed to be made entirely from the genuine all-weather-proof "Matta" Fabric. In ordering, please give measurement around chest over waistcoat (Ladies measure over the blouse), state height, colour preferred, and enclose remittance. (Post free U.K., but extra abroad.)

The featherweight "Mattamac" *itself* is "just right" for 75% of people. For those who need a *heavier* Coat, for hard, rough, Sporting, or Working wear, we have produced the durable

(Registered.)

Double Fabric and Wear

34 ozs. Weight, 77/6 up

***Less than* Double Weight & Price**

In cut, style, and finish, it is identical with the featherweight "Mattamac." The only difference is that the 19 oz. featherweight Coat is made up from *single* "Matta" Fabric, whilst the 34 oz. "Duo-Mattamac" is cut from *double* "Matta" Fabric—*two* of the tough, finely-spun cloths *united*, with the proofing *between*.

"Duo-Mattamac" Coats, though double *all through*, are medium-weight. The ordinary unbelted Coat is, roughly, two-thirds the weight of a Gabardine Raincoat. "Duo-Mattamac" Stormproofs are made in eleven models, following *exactly* the *cut* and *styles* of Featherweight "Mattamac" Coats, but in Fawn Colour only.

To order a "Duo-Mattamac":—Send remittance (unbelted Coat, 77/6; Belted, 85/-) stating height and chest measurement *over* waistcoat. If for a Lady, please say so, and measure *over Blouse*. Within 7 days, return for full money is permitted if dissatisfied. You can safely order now; or if preferred, send for the "Mattamac Booklet 26 S" describing also this "Duo-Mattamac" and showing a sample of its double-texture Fabric. Send orders to Pearson Bros., address below, or write for "Mattamac Booklet 26 S."

FEATHERWEIGHT "MATTA" (Registered) FABRIC

from which the "Mattamac" Weathercoat is entirely made, is a light-weight, closely-woven, intensely-strong and compact-folding material. It is tough, warmth-giving, "clean" wearing, and absolutely waterproof—so waterproof that even wind-driven rain cannot penetrate a "Mattamac."

SENT TO YOU ON 7 DAYS' FREE APPROVAL.

You can satisfy yourself about a "Mattamac" in actual wear. Each Coat is sent out on the understanding that it can be returned within seven days in exchange for the full purchase price should you so wish. You take no risk whatever in buying; if you do not like the Coat, you need not keep it. You can safely order now, without waiting for the Booklet to reach you.

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To face end of Text.

Complexion Soft and Clear as Baby's

EVERY woman has it, you know, **UNDERNEATH.** But how to remove the soiled, weather-worn outer skin with all its blemishes, is a secret at present little known. In America the women submit themselves to

THE HEROIC PROCESS OF SKINNING,

i.e., having the outer cuticle removed by a carbolic acid solution. The process is not only extremely painful, but necessitates the patient keeping to the house for several weeks. In this country

SCIENCE HAS PROGRESSED

so far that any woman, or man, may confidently remove their skin without pain or inconvenience of any kind. All that they need do is to get a little mercolized wax from the Chemist, and smear it over the face and neck.

IT TAKES ABOUT TEN DAYS

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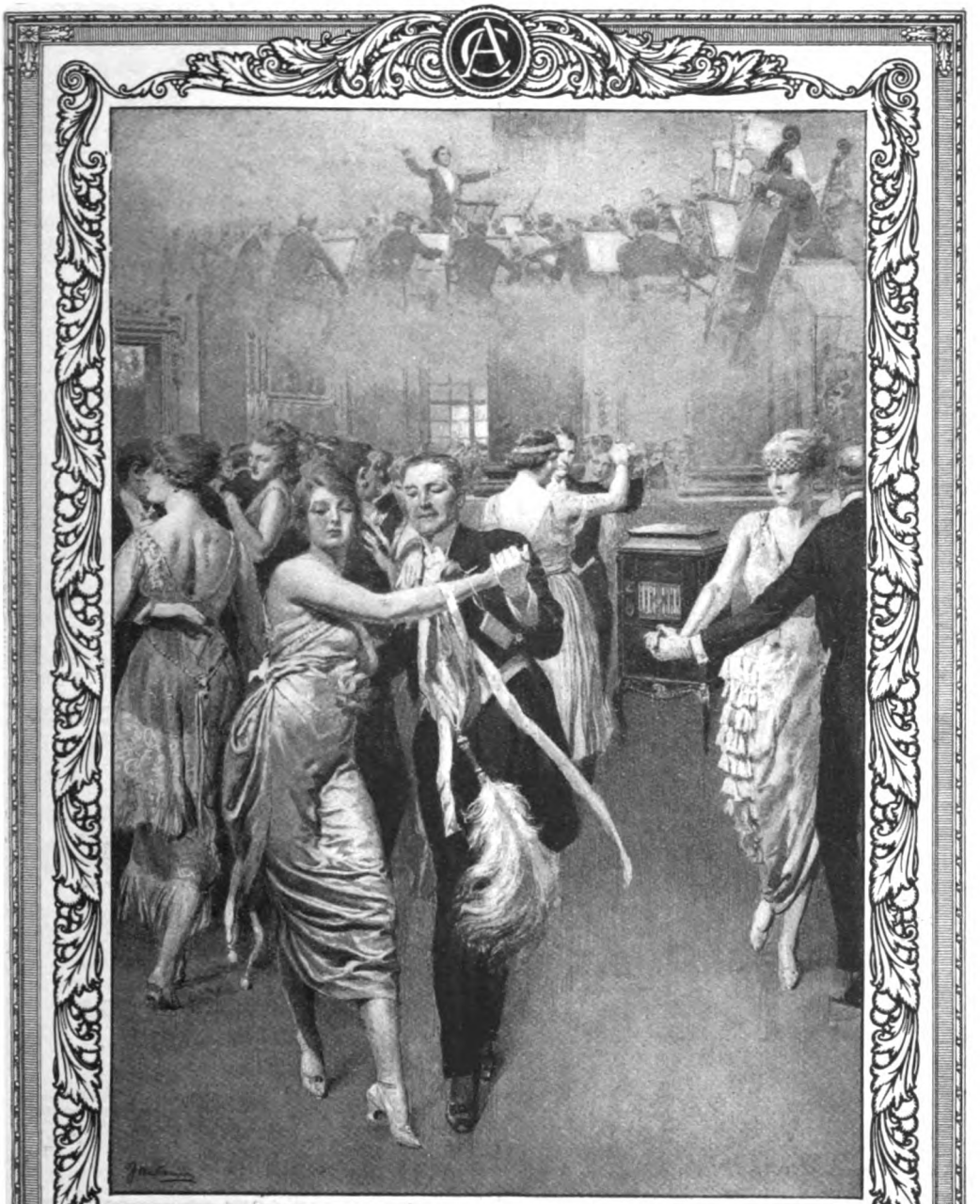

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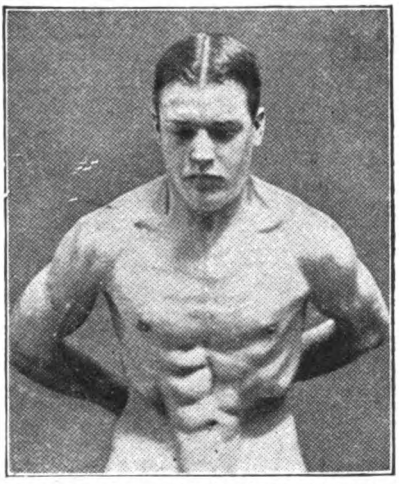

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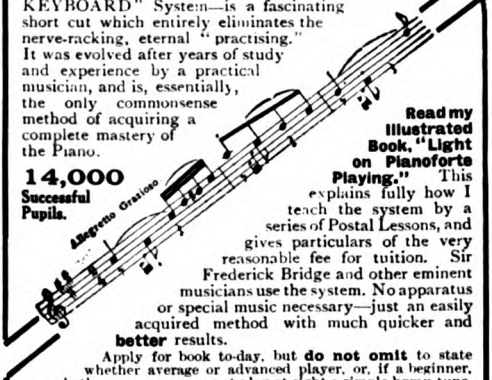

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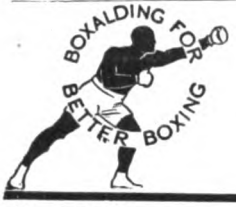

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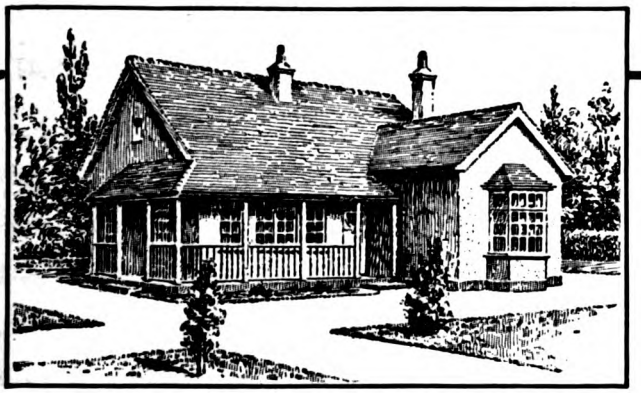

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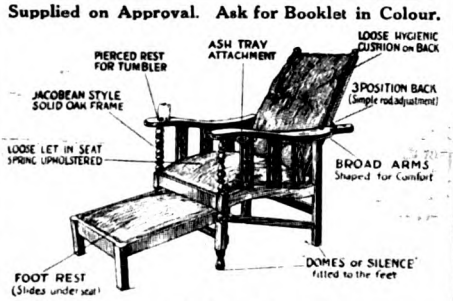

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It is not drugs nor medicine that can replace this deficiency of Nerve Force. These can only coerce or coax overworked and enfeebled organs into temporary functional activity. Electricity is the natural co-equivalent to human Nerve Force, and the success of the Pulvermacher Electrological Treatment is wholly due to the fact that it restores lost Nerve Force by the most scientific and successful method.

CURATIVE ELECTRICITY IN YOUR HOME

You can wear the Pulvermacher Appliance to your business daily or even while asleep. Although powerfully electrical, they give no shock to the system, but gently and steadily pour a continuous and curative flow of electricity into all the nerve centres. The whole nervous system responds quickly and sympathetically, and immediately all the functions of the body begin to be performed healthfully, easily, and with their natural vigour.

Write for this "Guide to Health and Strength" to-day.

If your nerves are weak,
If your digestion is poor,
If your liver is sluggish,
If you are constipated,
If you have Rheumatism or Gout,
If you are easily tired and depressed,
If you lack confidence or will-power,

or if you are in any way "below par," "run-down," or ailing, you will find the secret of health in its pages.

Post to the Superintendent. Pulvermacher Electrological Institute, Ltd. 56, Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

Those who can do so are cordially invited to call, when Free Advice and Demonstrations will be given.

Printed by THE CORNWALL PRESS, Ltd., Paris Garden, Stamford St., S.E., for the Proprietors, GEORGE NEWNES, LTD.

It takes Pounds to keep the Copper alight and Pence to use

Rinso.

Costly

Economical

LET RINSO do the washing, and you'll realize the waste of the copper fire. Rinso washes in cold water; it makes the clothes just as beautifully white and fresh, yet without any expense or hard work.

Just put the clothes to soak in cold water with Rinso overnight, rinse and hang to dry in the morning. That's all!

SOLD IN PACKETS EVERYWHERE.

By all Grocers, Stores, Oilmen, Chandlers, etc.

Rinso

THE COLD WATER WASHER

R 128—23 R S HUDSON LIMITED, LIVERPOOL, WEST BROMWICH, AND LONDON.

"I want Comfort"

"You might let the bootman have my best shoes, Ethel."

"Why, there's nothing the matter with them, is there, dear?"

"No, but I want comfort. Get him to fix some 'Thill' Rubber Soles."

"But, Jack, you can't wear rubber soles to business."

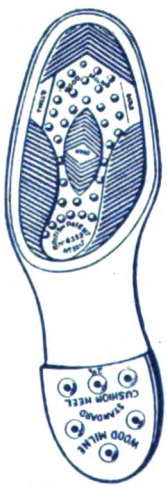
"Evidently you imagine that 'Thills' are hefty, thick things. Not a bit of it."

"What are they like, then?"

"Well, Jones showed me his to-day—he wears them to the office. They're light weight with feather edges, and really don't show at all."

"Certainly, Mr. Jones is pretty particular. Perhaps I'd better have 'Thills' on my shoes too."

WOOD-MILNE "Thill" PATENT Sole



Made in Black Rubber.

Prices: Ladies' sizes, **2/3** per pair; Men's sizes, **3/6** per pair; Children's sizes, **1/3** per pair. Perfect adhesion is obtained by the use of "Spenwood" Liquid Cement. No Nails or Screws are used. Let your Bootman fix them. He will do it for a small extra charge.

To ensure getting a worthy mate for the "THILL" Sole insist upon having

WOOD-MILNE "Standard Cushion" Heels

Ladies', 9d. per pair. Men's, 1/3 per pair.

If any difficulty in obtaining, please send us the name and address of your nearest bootman.

WOOD - MILNE LTD.
(Footwear Sales, Dept. S.M.),
42/46, Wigmore Street, London, W.1.

CHRISTMAS NUMBER

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

PAINTING AS A PASTIME

BY

WINSTON CHURCHILL

Bird's Custard
as a HOT sauce
BIRDS
CUSTARD
King Pudding's
golden crown!

KNOWLEDGE

No man who sets out seriously to increase his knowledge of business by training under the guidance of the School of Accountancy can fail to qualify for a responsible position

SCHOOL of Accountancy postal training is not to be undertaken lightly or in a half-hearted manner. It means seriously applying yourself to study after the day's work is done, on at least two evenings a week over a period averaging six months.

By this means alone will it be possible for you to achieve similar success to that which has already been won by thousands of students who have preceded you, a few of whose records you will find on pages 97—116 of our prospectus.

If, having these facts put plainly before you, you are sufficiently stern of purpose to devote yourself seriously and conscientiously to the training we offer, you have this definite guarantee that your effort will not be wasted :—

If you will make an effort to qualify for a responsible position in business, the School of Accountancy will stand by you until you succeed

When we undertake to train a man to qualify for an executive position, or to pass an independent examination which confers a recognised professional status, we train that man until he succeeds. Six to twelve months is the time usually taken by our Students to complete their courses, but there is no fixed limit to the training, and no extra fee is charged, even if the tuition should be spread over a period of several years. Few of our Students fail to pass examinations at the first sitting, but in those cases the training is continued without further charge.

Become an Accountant, Company Secretary, Office or Works Manager

These are the men who are needed today in business, and you can definitely qualify for such positions by training in your own home, in your spare time, under the guidance of the School of Accountancy. The training we give is successful because it is thorough, and because the tutors who train you know exactly what knowledge is needed by a man in order to secure the position he sets out to attain.

Why not raise yourself to a Professional status?

Out of a total of 15 Honours Certificates for the June, 1921, Examinations for the London Association of Accountants, 12 were won by the School of Accountancy students, who during the past six years have secured nearly all First Places and Prizes. At the Chartered Institute of Secretaries our showing is 90 per cent. passes in the Intermediate and 100 per cent. passes in the Final Examinations. Achievements at the Examinations of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and Society of Incorporated Accountants are equally remarkable. In all commercial examinations our record is one long string of First Places, Medals, Prizes and Distinctions.

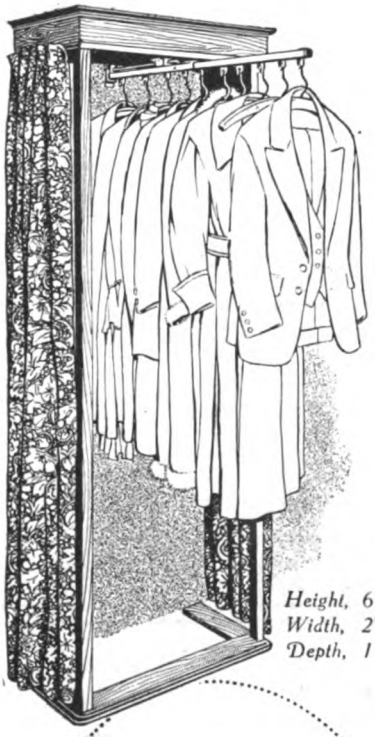
✱ This Valuable Business Guide——FREE

It contains useful information about business and business training, gives particulars of all our Courses and Terms, and includes facts which will definitely convince you that our postal training will qualify you to fill a responsible executive position. Write for a copy to-day.

THE SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY

2, West Regent Street, Glasgow
10, Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.2
Millgate Buildings, Long Millgate, MANCHESTER
62, Dale Street - - - LIVERPOOL
Post Office House, Infirmary St., LEEDS
8, Newhall Street - BIRMINGHAM

THERE IS ROOM FOR 8 GARMENTS IN THIS COMPACT WARDROBE



Height, 6' 2"
Width, 2' 2"
Depth, 1' 3"

—AND IT MAKES AN IDEAL XMAS OR WEDDING GIFT

HERE is something better, cheaper, and more convenient than the ordinary wardrobe. The Everitt Canopy Wardrobe is the latest and most practical equipment for the care of the clothes. It is fitted with the famous Everitt Patent Extending Coat Rail—the ONLY fitting which can be extended completely outside the wardrobe, and which allows any garment to be easily selected.

EVERITT'S Canopy WARDROBE

(PATENT APPLIED FOR)

is wonderfully compact, and forms a handsome piece of furniture for the modern house or flat. It can be fitted up in a few minutes. Two screws fix it to the wall.

Prices :

Complete with Extending Coat Rail, but without Coat Hangers or Curtains.

POLISHED OAK £4 18 6
MAHOGANY FINISH ... £5 5 0

Curtains 15/- extra.

Packed and delivered free anywhere in the United Kingdom. Special Hangers are not necessary, but we can supply : Coat, 1/6 and 2/- each ; Suit, 1/6 and 2/9 each. Ladies' Costume Hangers, 2/- each. If your Furnishing House does not stock Everitt products, send your orders direct to the manufacturers :

EVERITT'S PATENTS CO. (Showrooms)
31 KINGLY ST. REGENT ST. LONDON W1

WE SUGGEST THIS TO YOU.

THE Everitt Patent Extending Coat Rail—as illustrated above in use in the Everitt Canopy Wardrobe—is just the thing you are looking for. It will double the capacity of your present wardrobe! Eight to twelve garments can easily be suspended from the Everitt Extending Coat Rail without crowding or crushing. When the extending arm is raised, all the garments can be brought right outside the wardrobe : they can then be separated to allow plenty of room for removing or replacing any one in an instant. You can fix the fitting yourself in a few minutes.

EVERITT EXTENDING COAT RAIL

PRICES :

12in., with 8 runners **£1 11 6**
14in., with 10 runners **£1 17 6**
16in. and 18in., with 12 runners **£1 19 6**

Post free in the United Kingdom.
Booklet 835 free on request.

¶ Why not buy an Everitt Extending Coat Rail? Made of brass. Nothing to get out of order. Fits any wardrobe.

Yardley's
Perfume of Freesia

A fascinating Perfume giving to perfection the distinctive and alluring beauty of the fragrance of the Freesia flower.

THE FREESIA SERIES also includes Face Powder, Brilliantine, Hair Lotion, Toilet Water, Bath Salts, Talcum Powder and Toilet Soap.

PRICES :

Perfume - 5/-, 8/6, 11/6, 17/6 per bottle.
Powder - 3/6 per box.
Bath Salt Tablets - 3/- per box of 1 dozen.

FREE SAMPLE.—Perfume your Vanity Bag with a dainty Freesia Perfume Card. Write for one to-day.

Of all Chemists and Stores, and from

YARDLEY & CO., LTD.,
8, NEW BOND ST., LONDON.

29/- for 50

of either size post free.

Carasada
CIGARS

With the Fragrant Havana Flavour.

Unequalled for perfection of blend and workmanship. Distinctive in flavour and aroma.

The Finest 7d. Cigar Procurable.

15/- for 25 57/6 per 100

of either size, post free, or 5 Sample Cigars for 3/2.

Order early for Christmas.

TO FRIENDS ABROAD.—We will send a minimum quantity of 200 Carasadas of the sizes illustrated, post and duty free, from our bonded warehouse to any address on receipt of a remittance for **£4-10s.**

GREENS
30 CORNHILL E.C.3 LTD
(Opposite The Royal Exchange)

Pioneers of the High-Class British Cigar.

'SAXONE'

PRICE REDUCTION

OF STYLE 4019 (AS ILLUSTRATED) and 4006 (same in glace kid, patent cap).

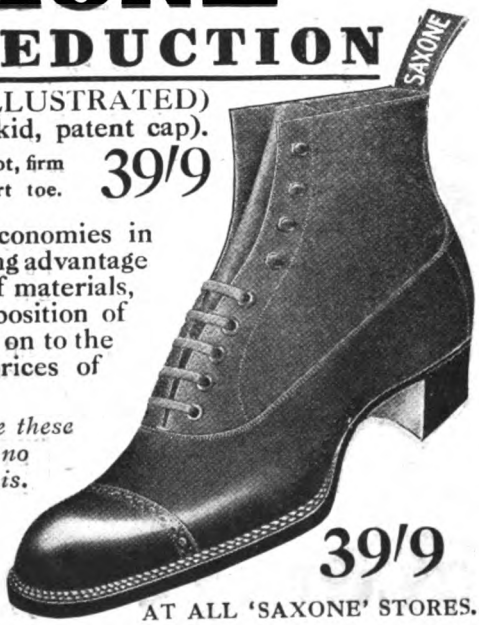
STYLE 4019 — Black Box Calf Boot, firm walking sole, smart toe. **39/9**

BY means of various economies in manufacture and by taking advantage of the fall in the price of materials, we are now in the happy position of being able to pass this saving on to the wearer by reducing the prices of some of our models.

Go to your 'Saxone' Store, see these boots and you will admit that no finer value is obtainable than this.

MADE ONLY BY THE SAXONE SHOE CO. LTD.

LONDON: 5 & 6 Coventry St., W.1; 231 Regent St., W.1; 56 & 57 Strand, W.C.2; 11 & 12 Cheapside; and 5 & 6 New Broad St., E.C.2.
And all large towns.



39/9

AT ALL 'SAXONE' STORES.

Springy, light and watertight

ENGLEBERT

SOLES HEELS **SUBSOLES** AND TIPS

"Springy, Light and Watertight"

No Nails.
No Screws.
No Heat.
No Trouble.

Just Stuck on with Rubber Solution.

ENGLEBERT TYRES, LTD., 101, Bolsover Street, Great Portland Street, LONDON, W.1.

And at

81, Downing Street, London Road, Manchester

LONG LIFE TO YOUR BOOTS.

The "Solution" of all your Boot Troubles

A CHILD CAN FIX THEM.

Insist on these for the Winter Months

Lightest in Weight—Longest in Wear.
Dainty and Durable—Smart and Strong.

They are stocked and recommended by all the leading Boot and Shoe Dealers and Stores. If you cannot obtain them from your regular dealer, send us his name and address, or we will forward a pair of Subsoles, with free tube of solution, post free for 4/6 (Gent.'s), or 3/- (Ladies').

Please state size of boot when ordering.

C. C.

Springy, light and watertight

3-PIECE SUITES

Settee and Two Easy Chairs

In Tapestry to customers' selection. Patterns on application.

EASY PAYMENTS

£3 down and 25/- monthly

or 2/- in the £ discount for cash.

The "Hendon."

THE "HENDON" £32 : 10 : 0
THE "ETON" £42 : 10 : 0

Carriage paid to railway station nearest your residence.

If not approved of can be returned and money refunded.

DESCRIPTION:—Both suites are of comfortable, full size. The "Eton" being the largest, has also loose down cushions—same are upholstered in woollen tapestry of serviceable quality and artistic designs—interior work is soundly carried out, care being taken that wear and tear is well guarded against The best of springs, flock and canvas only being used. All pieces being mounted on reliable castors.

The "Eton."

Pounds will be saved in Furnishing by applying for our Complete Furnishing Guide.

GLOBE Furnishing Co. J. R. GRANT, Proprietor. (Dept. E). **Pembroke Place, LIVERPOOL.**

MANSFIELD'S

PATENT AUTOMATIC

Water & Oil Finders

are used by leading Governments, Railway Companies, Land Companies, Well-Boring Engineers, and others.

A Colonial Engineer writes: "Since purchasing the Instrument I have selected 300 sites, most of which I have either bored upon with our own plants, or had bored by sub-contractors. In every instance we have been successful."

Prices of Water Finding Instruments are:

£50 locating at all depths up to 200ft.
£75 " " " " " 500ft.
£125 " " " " " 1,000ft.

Prices of Water and Oil Finding Instruments are:

£200 locating at all depths up to 3,500ft.
£275 " " " " 4,500ft.
£375 " " " " 6,000ft.

Delivery at Colonial or Foreign Seaports £3 extra.

We undertake the location of sites and boring at lump sum prices under guarantee of

"No full supply no pay."

Particulars on application to

W. MANSFIELD & CO., 17, BRUNSWICK ST., LIVERPOOL.

Makers of Well-Boring Plant, Pumps, Windmills, Oil Engines, and everything connected with Water Supply and Irrigation.

Cables: "MANTLES, LIVERPOOL." Telephone No.: 1392 BANK.

Cosy Warmth with no unhealthy odours.

THAT is what the Lawson *Odourless* Gas Heater will give you. It *radiates* warmth—heats from both sides, and fills the whole room with warmth. It is the *safest* gas heater made. There is no open flame. It is portable. With gas at 5s. a 1,000 feet, it only costs 1d. an hour to heat a room 16 feet square.

Lawson

ODOURLESS Gas Heater

Standard Size, 14in. x 11in. *Black-lead or dull nickel finish*, 48/-; *polished nickel finish*, 54/-; *enamel finish*, 63/-. *Call and see it. Stocked at thousands of shops. If any difficulty in obtaining, write to—*

LAWSON MANUFACTURING Co. Ld., 323, Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

Telegrams: Okeebo, London. *Telephone: North 2052.*

Xmas

A Gift of Beautiful Jewels

has always been the supreme expression of a man's homage to a woman.

Single Cir Pearl earrings of marvellous orient on solid gold mounts. **£1 . 1 : 0** per pair.

Lustrous Ciro Pearl dress stud on gold mount. **£1 : 1 : 0**

Pearls especially have an irresistible fascination for most women, and no gift to ***her*** is more certain of instant appreciation than the equivalent of an exquisite necklet of real pearls.

Ciro Pearl cross-over ring in gold or platinette. **£1 : 1 : 0** The pearls will deceive experts.

Beautiful single pearl ring on gold or platinette mount. **£1 : 1 : 0**

Ciro Pearls

have all the allure of the finest deep-sea specimens, the same texture, weight and iridescence, and, most important of all, they impart to the wearer the wondrous charm of the highly-prized Oriental.

Gold Bar Brooch with unique Ciro Pearl. **£1 : 1 : 0**

It would be difficult for the most fastidious shopper to find a more attractive selection of suitable Xmas tokens than those here shown. Ciro Pearls have won their high reputation on quality alone. Every purchase is fully guaranteed.

Round or pear shaped drop earrings equal in all respects to the genuine. Solid gold mounts. **£1 : 1 : 0**

Gold Scarf Pin with marvellous pear-shaped or round Ciro Pearl. **£1 : 1 : 0**

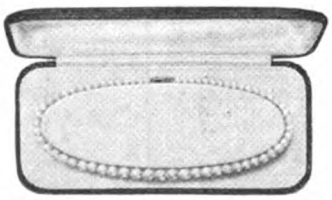


Illustration of our marvellous 16 in. Ciro Pearl Necklet. **£1 : 1 : 0** Other lengths at proportionate rates.

Distinctive platinette brooch with 3 Ciro Pearls copied from the genuine. **£1 : 1 : 0**

Gifts

Express your thought in Ciro Pearls and the success of your Xmas Gift is assured.

OUR UNIQUE OFFER.

On receipt of One Guinea we will send a Necklet of Ciro Pearls, 16 in. long, or a Ring, Brooch, Earrings, or any other Jewel mounted with Ciro Pearls (complete with case). If, after comparing them with real or other artificial pearls, they are not found equal to the former or superior to the latter, return them to us within seven days, and we will refund your money. Other lengths of Necklets at proportionate rates—solid Gold Clasp, 2s. 6d. extra. Attractive cases supplied with all goods, but specially fine cases, as illustrated, 2s. extra. Necklet cases, as illustrated, 3s. 6d. extra.

Write for new descriptive Booklet No. 12, just published (sent post free).

CIRO PEARLS, LTD. (Dept. 12), 39, Old Bond Street (Piccadilly End).
Our Showrooms are on the 1st Floor over Lloyd's Bank.
Indian Branch: 7, Esplanade East, Calcutta.

If you know of a house where there's a Baby —— gladden it this Xmas with the Gift of a cosy Otterburn Baby-Rug ——

Actual photograph of the Otterburn Baby-Rug: suitable for Pram, Cot, Cradle, or as a Nursing-Wrap. Size 30" by 36", fringed at ends. Colours: Cream, Grey, Sky, Saxe, Rose, Navy, and Biscuit.

This Otterburn "Tab" should be particularly sought, when you buy a Baby-Rug, you may be asked to take an imitation.

Nothing that you could send to a baby's Mother would be so useful, so durable, or *so welcome* as an Otterburn Baby-Rug—soft, cosy, fleecy, *warm*: to serve as a Nursing Wrap during the day or night, as a Cover for the Pram, and to keep Baby cosy in Cradle or Cot.

Babies gurgle with joy in Otterburns; Mothers like to cuddle their Babies in the downy bundles Otterburn Rugs make: and *the years* of cosy Service that they give are quite disproportionate to their cost.

(6)

Price 15/6

As a Cot Coverlet.

The first Wm. Waddell started making Tweeds and Rugs in the little village of Otterburn in 1821. Soon his Mill became noted over all the Country-side—folk came from Cumberland, Westmorland, Durham, and all parts of the Home County to buy his hand-woven wares.

The Otterburn Baby-Rug as a Pram Cover.

Then, the demand became greater with increased facilities for communication of the goodwill of Otterburn; until, to-day, the old hand-loom Mill (still working to the limit of its capacity) makes merely a fraction of the output—the remainder being produced by two big new Power Mills near Carlisle.

Waddells of the third and fourth generation *personally* control all three Mills, and every process, from selection of the fleeces to the dyeing and finishing, is under the supervision of the Waddell family and according to the honest, time-proved standards laid down one hundred years ago.

As a Nursing Wrap.

As a Cradle Coverlet.

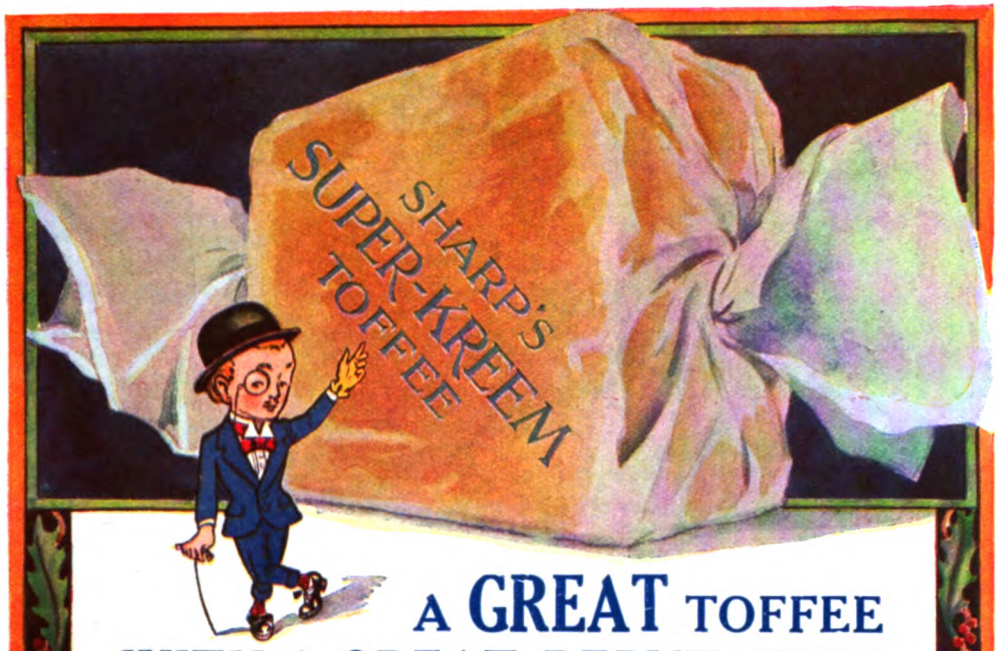
Some of the uses of the Otterburn Baby Rug.

15/6 Otterburn Rug

Neck-and-Shoulder Cheviot pure new Wool.

Sold by good-class Drapers throughout the Country. In case of difficulty, supplied direct post free, if you send 15/6, mention your Draper's name, and state colour required, to—

Otterburn Mill, Ltd., Otterburn, Northumberland.



A GREAT TOFFEE WITH A GREAT REPUTATION

To millions of little boys and girls the chief delight of Christmas time is to revel to their hearts' desire in an abundance of SHARP'S SUPER-KREEM TOFFEE. Super-Kreem, with its rich, creamy flavour, is made to give delight—but not delight alone ; it is a pure wholesome food—a nourishing, sustaining addition to the daily diet. Give yourself, your friends, and the little ones the King of All Sweets—buy plenty of Super-Kreem.

8d. per ¼ lb.

Sold loose by weight, or in 4-lb. decorated tins—also sold in 1/-, 1/6, and 2/9 tins. If unobtainable in your district kindly send p.c., giving name of your confectioner.

E. SHARP & SONS, LTD., MAIDSTONE.
The Largest Manufacturers of Toffee in the World.

"It Speaks for Itself."

SHARP'S SUPER-KREEM TOFFEE

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REGD UMBRELLAS.

Just Wrap Your OLD UMBRELLA in paper, tie to a board or stick, and post to us to-day with P.O. for **10/-**. By next post it will come back "as good as new," re-covered with our "Defiance" Union and securely packed. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra. A postcard will bring you our illustrated Catalogue of "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from **5/-** upwards.

J. STANWORTH & CO.,
Royal Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.

What is Camelhair?

JAEGER Pure Undyed Camelhair Material is made from the very fine hair of the two-humped Bactrian Camel which lives in Eastern Siberia and Northern Manchuria.

Camelhair has a charm peculiarly its own. It also excels in warmth-giving qualities, and its light weight is a marked feature.

A JAEGER CAMELHAIR GOWN once enjoyed is always desired.

M. 94
£3-15-6
to
10 Guineas.

Ask for the Jaeger Gown List.

JAEGER
Pure Camel Hair

LONDON DEPOTS:

126, Regent Street, W.1.
456, Strand, W.C.2.
30, Sloane Street, S W.1.
102, Kens. High St., W.8.
131a, Victoria Street, S.W.1.
85-86, Cheapside, E.C.2.

Jaeger Agents in every town and throughout the British Empire.

The correct price is Jacksons' price

Branches in all large towns and a huge mail order trade enable us to place orders for material at advantageous prices. Our enormous turnover keeps down production costs—selling cheaply, then, is just a matter of business policy for which we are famous.

Jacksons' prices are always the lowest possible for the sterling quality of the goods offered.

The "MONACH" Boot.

A smart Derby boot (heavier styles for country wear) of Brown Russet Calf, made on the hand-sewn principle. At **25/-** per pair this purchase saves you 10/-. Made to give excellent wear.

Brown, No. 1261. Black, No. 3231.

25/-

Postage 1/- extra.

The "MURIEL" Shoe.

Made in all prevailing styles and materials. Model illustrates a smart Glacé Gibson shoe, which is also supplied in Nigger and Grey Suède and Patent Leather.

Patent Leather, No. 75450.
Nigger Suède, No. 74480.
Grey Suède, No. 71480.
Black Glacé No. 71440.

22/6

Postage 9d. extra.

If you cannot visit one of Jacksons' Branches, you can easily order by mail from the profusely Illustrated Catalogue of Ladies' and Gent.'s Hats, Boots, Shoes, Raincoats, etc. A post-card sent for this Catalogue will save you pounds.

BRANCHES IN ALL LARGE TOWNS.

JACKSONS, LTD. (Dept. 15),
Victoria Works, Stockport,
Nr. Manchester

WE'VE WON

Jacksons' Win by 2 Points - Value & Price.

A Really Useful Present

From £6 6s. 0d. to 12s. 6d.

Why Onoto is the Pen

It cannot leak—it holds 50% more ink than any other self-filling pen—it is filled in a flash and cleans itself in filling—it is the simplest pen to use.

Onoto Presentation Cases

All Models of Onoto, the Pen partially or completely covered in gold or silver, are sent out in silk-lined presentation cases without extra charge.

No. 3172. Self-filling Model. Body and Top covered Silver **42/-**

No. 3272. The same in rolled gold, **42/-**

No. 3405. Self-filling Model, long, two wide 18-ct. gold bands, **32/6**

No. 6000. Self-filling Streamline Model, long, **21/-**

No. 3000. Self-filling Model, long, **17/6**

Get an Onoto Diary for 1922. The only Diary with a double index and £100 prize competition.

Give an Onoto to all your friends this Xmas

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO., LTD.,
BUNHILL ROW, LONDON, E.C.1.

Arrol-Johnston

THE NEW 15·9 TYPE "C" CAR

The Type "C" Car is an entirely new model, embodying the very latest ideas in modern motor car construction. Among the many improvements that have been effected is the lengthening of the engine stroke from 120 m/m to 130 m/m. This results in a considerable gain in power without affecting the rating of 15.9 h.p., or the low petrol consumption.

At 2,000 revolutions per minute the engine develops no less than 36 Brake Horse Power. It is safe to claim that no other car engine of similar rating achieves such remarkable efficiency.

PRICES *(as from 1st November, 1921).*

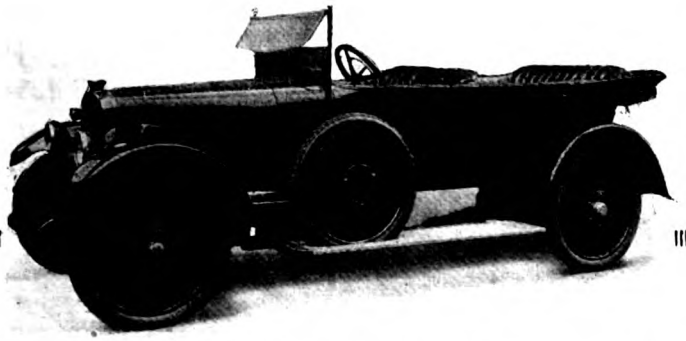
With Full Equipment.

15.9 h.p. Touring Model - - £650.
15.9 h.p. All-Weather Model - £795.
15.9 h.p. Saloon Model - - £850.

Complete Delivered at Works.

ARROL-JOHNSTON, LTD.,
DUMFRIES, SCOTLAND.

London Dealers:
LEVERETT, THORP & KEARTON, LTD.,
122 New Bond Street, W.1.



FREE

Toilet Gift

of beauty boxes containing four famous Icilma Beautifiers.

Post Coupon To-day

(including 2d. stamp for postage of box) and we will send you ABSOLUTELY FREE a dainty toilet outfit containing generous supplies of

1. **Icilma Cream**, the finest Toilet Cream in the wide world. Fragrant with Icilma Bouquet—foamy—non-greasy.
2. **Icilma Bouquet Face Powder**, the wonderful silk-sifted Face Powder.
3. **Icilma Shampoo Sachets** for WET Shampoos — a nice and pleasant way of washing the hair.
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Icilma

Toilet Preparations

of all Chemists & Stores.

COUPON for FREE Beauty Box

Write in CAPITALS your name and address ONLY on the Coupon. NOTHING ELSE.

To INTERNATIONAL ICILMA TRADING CO., LTD. (Dept. **14b**), 37/45, King's Road, St. Pancras, London, N.W.1.

Please send me your Free Beauty Box. I enclose 2d. stamp to pay postage and packing.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

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Post TO-DAY in a sealed envelope stamped with 2d. stamp.

The Aged and their Diet

The sluggish circulation of aged persons is due to thickened or overcharged arteries, brought about by heavy, indigestible foods. Dr. Ridge's Patent Cooked Food is light, dainty, and wonderfully sustaining, and because of the Scientific elimination of all harmful elements, it promotes an easy flow of invigorated blood through the system. Every person past middle life should make AT LEAST one meal per day of

RIDGE'S FOOD

60 YEARS' TEST
STILL THE BEST

Obtainable at all branches of Boots, Parke's, Lewis and Burrows, Timothy White, Taylor's, and at over 15,000 other chemists and grocers. Insist on having Dr. Ridge's Food and accept no other.

Tins 9d., 1/6, 3/- and 6/-

ROYAL FOOD MILLS, LONDON, N.16.

Don't neglect your Hair

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KOKO

for the HAIR

Has 35 Years Reputation.

1/6, 3/- & 5/6 per bottle.

OF ALL CHEMISTS & STORES.

KOKO MARICOPAS Co., Ltd.,
16 Bevis Marks, London, E.C.3.

OLD HATS MADE NEW

And REMODELLED to PRESENT FASHION

The cost is so trifling, so don't throw away your old Hat.

VELOUR, FELT & BEAVER

HATS REMODELLED. Incredible results have been accomplished at **A. Wright's Hat Renovating Factory (Dept. 20), Albert Road, Luton.** The success of A. Wright's is a credit to the clever Luton Hat Workers.

Send for Free Catalogue of **80** *styles of latest shapes. From this list ladies can choose the design to which they wish their old hat remodelled and made fashionable.*

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SEND YOUR HAT NOW.

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It is the permanent value of a beautiful Jewel that appeals to all! See the thousands displayed at any of H. Samuel's 85 Shops—there's a Branch near YOU. By buying from the actual maker at Factory Prices

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YOU MAY SAVE POUNDS!

See the thousands of amazing bargains in Watches, Jewellery, Electro-plate and Cutlery at your nearest Branch to-day.

CALL NOW!

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42/-

FINE TRACE NECKLET. Fashionable design in Gold set with 2 exquisite Aquamarines. **42/-**

GENT'S KEYLESS LEVER. Fully jewelled lever movement, warranted 10 years. Handsome Rolled Gold Case **63/-**

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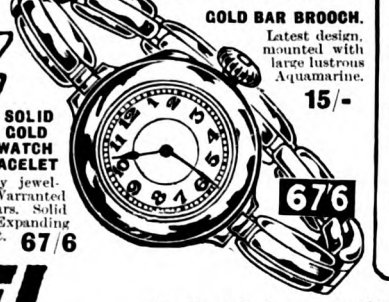
GOLD BAR BROOCH. Latest design, mounted with large lustrous Aquamarine. **15/-**



67/6

SOLID GOLD WATCH BRACELET Fully jewelled. Warranted 10 years. Solid Gold Expanding Bracelet. **67/6**

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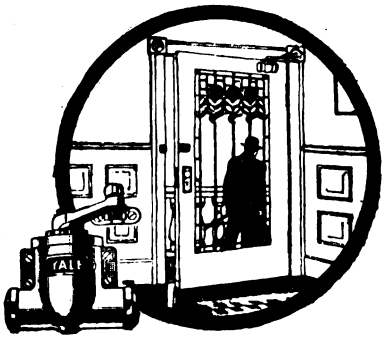

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MAKE an end of door-closing neglect with a Yale Reversible Door Closer. No more door slamming, no more chilling draughts; less fuel expense and doctor bills.

Closes the door every time, quickly, silently, ending with a slow, sure push.

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THE word Yale used in connection with Locks, Door Closers, Hoists, Carburetters, Industrial Trucks, etc., is exclusively the property of The Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company.

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Electric Light for Nothing

A MIRACLE OF INGENUITY

IDEAL XMAS GIFT for HOME OR COLONIES.

Give your friend a useful and novel Xmas Gift, a **real dynamo in a beautiful little hand torch**—a wonderful invention that has made Battery Torches obsolete. The Leverlite Automatic Pocket Lamp **gives a strong beam of electric light wherever you want it.** The Leverlite **never requires recharging.** Year after year it gives good service at a cost of **nothing** for upkeep.

The Leverlite is a miracle of ingenuity which should be found in every house. Although measuring only 4½ inches by 3½ inches, it contains a six-pole dynamo which rotates (in response to a gentle movement of the lever) and gives a **beam of light of any desired strength.**

Exquisitely made and just right for the pocket. The perfect inexhaustible hand torch for **Military, Sportsmen, Travellers, Tourists, Motorists, Doctors, Householders, Campers-out, Watchmen, Night Anglers, Farmers, Colonists,** etc.

Leverlite takes the Universal Pocket Torch Bulb; it is unaffected by heat, cold, or water, and can be put to a thousand and one uses. Made in three qualities.

HOW TO ORDER: Remit **£3-11-6** for the Leverlite de-Luxe, finished in exquisite Ivorine; **44/-** for superb model "B"; **32/-** for popular model "A," in smooth finished aluminium case. Colonial postage **2/6** extra. **Every Leverlite Torch is guaranteed.**

Obtainable of Stores and Boots Cash Chemists everywhere.

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LEVERLITE LAMPS (Dept. 10), 23, OLD BOND ST., LONDON, W.1.

Buy your Ring direct from The Ring Shop for the World and save money!

A Canadian purchaser wrote:

"....after seeing the Ring, I was more than ever sure that I could not have done so well by dealing in a small town....you give in every way just what you advertise."

Thousands of people, Abroad and at Home, have bought their Rings from the Northern Goldsmiths. You might do worse than follow their example.

The RING BOOK, which we will send to you, describes the method which has made Ring Buying *safe* for all the World. It contains numerous testimonies from satisfied buyers.

Our method of Ring selling enables you to select from 122 different styles of beautiful Gem Rings in your own Home. We send the Ring you have chosen, fully insured, on a fortnight's free approval. If, within the 14 days, you wish to change your mind, we will either exchange the Ring, allowing full value for it, or you can return it *and receive your money back in full.* If you decide to keep the Ring, you do so on this understanding:—

Whenever you wish, after one year or ten years, we will repurchase your Ring, under Ring Book Conditions, less 10% of its cost.

This is the *fairest method* of Ring-Selling known. The RING BOOK tells all about it. We send it and FINGER SIZE CARD, POST FREE, to anyone interested in Engagement, Gift, Dress and Men's Rings, priced from £5 : 5 : 0 up to £325.

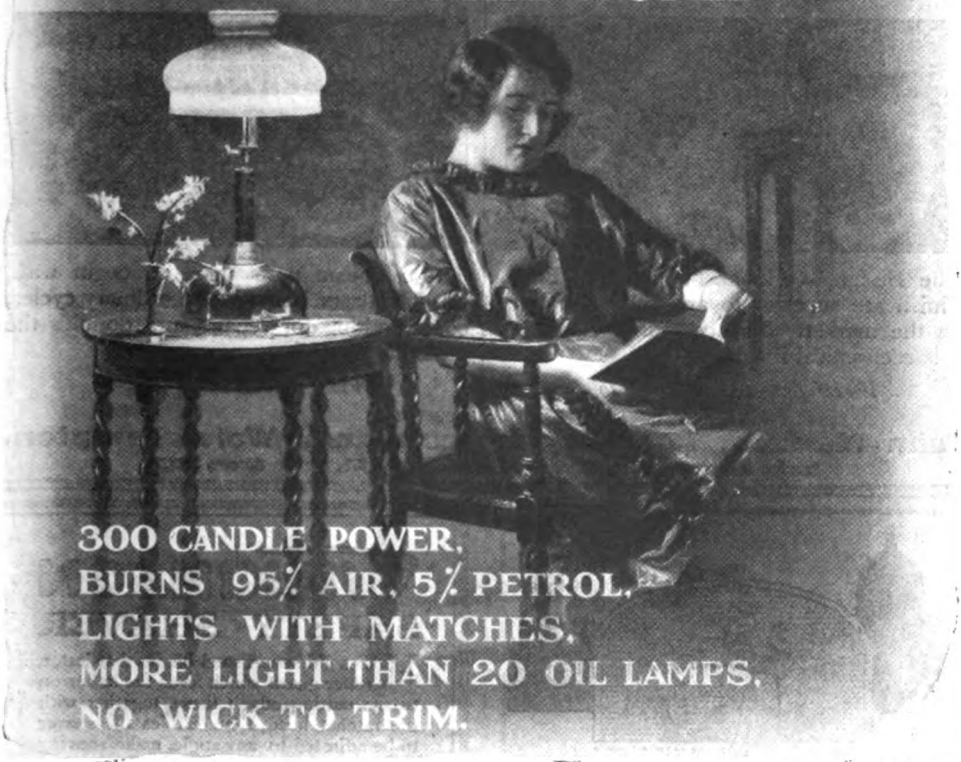
The NORTHERN GOLDSMITHS Co.

"The RING SHOP for the WORLD."

No. 6, GOLDSMITHS' HALL, NEWCASTLE-upon-TYNE, ENGLAND (Estd. 1892). (2)

The Coleman Quick-Lite

MOST BRILLIANT LIGHT IN THE WORLD



"A Wonderful Lamp"—"Just the Light we have always longed for."

SO SAYS EVERY WORRIED HOUSEWIFE WHO HAS HAD DAILY TO PUT UP WITH THE TROUBLE AND ANNOYANCE OF INEFFICIENT LIGHTING SERVICE.

WE CLAIM TO OFFER YOU - THE MOST BRILLIANT LIGHT IN THE WORLD, AND THE GREATEST HOME LIGHT EVER PERFECTED.

OUR EVIDENCE - - - - - THE ABOVE PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN BY THE LIGHT OF THE LAMP WITH A TWO AND HALF MINUTE EXPOSURE.

WHAT MORE CONVINCING PROOF COULD BE DESIRED?

THE QUICK-LITE GENERATES ITS OWN GAS FROM ORDINARY PETROL—AND LIGHTS WITH COMMON MATCHES—NO SMOKE OR ODOUR—ABSOLUTELY SAFE—CONVENIENT—CLEAN—ECONOMICAL—WARM—COSTS HALFPENNY PER HOUR—NEEDS FILLING ONLY ONCE A WEEK—NO DAILY CLEANING NECESSARY—A JOY IN THE HOME.

POST FREE COMPLETE.

CQ307 RIBBED SHADE - **79/6** CQ318 DECORATED SHADE - - - **90/6**
CQ329 AS ILLUSTRATED **82/6** HURRICANE LANTERN (Wind & Stormproof) **70/-**

BRACKET LAMPS. CHANDELIERS.
LIGHTING SYSTEM.

THE COLEMAN QUICK-LITE CO., LTD., 1, ELECTRIC PARADE, WEST NORWOOD, S.E.27.

IRELAND—6, LOWER ORMOND QUAY, DUBLIN.
NEWCASTLE—12, GREY STREET.
SCOTLAND—140, BUCHANAN STREET, GLASGOW.
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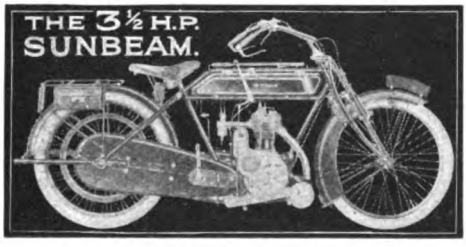
SUNBEAMS

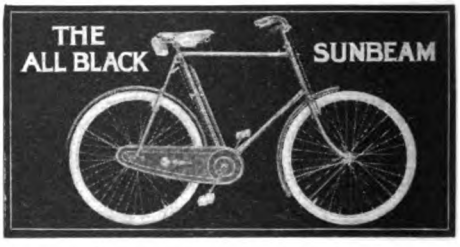
This is the 3½ H.P. Sunbeam Motor Bicycle, with Patent Enclosed Oil-Bathed Chain Transmission. It is the finest Double Purpose Mount in the world, and will take a sidecar anywhere.



The Design, Workmanship, and All-Black Finish are superior to any other machine on the market. The control is easy, and it is economical in running.

Write for List 4, free, to

This is the All-Black Sunbeam Pedal Bicycle with the little Oil Bath Gear Case, which automatically lubricates the Chain and Driving Bearings. The machine therefore runs under ideal conditions always and without friction.



The Sunbeam costs more to begin with, but it outlasts half-a-dozen ordinary cycles, costs nothing for repairs, and doubles the pleasure of cycling.

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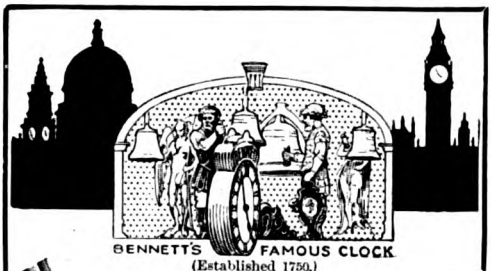
The Makers:
John Marston, Limited, Sunbeamland, Wolverhampton.
London Showrooms: 57, Holborn Viaduct, E.C.1, and 157, Sloane Street, S.W.1.



BENNETTS FAMOUS CLOCK
(Established 1750.)

£10

SIR JOHN BENNETT, Ltd.
65, CHEAPSIDE, LONDON, E.C.2.
Also at 105, Regent Street, W.1.

The Present Fashion

Comfortable, convenient, secure; and will fit any wrist. 9ct. Gold Watch Bracelet, as illustrated, fine quality, lever movement, strong and accurate,

£10.

Send for Illustrated Catalogue, post free.

WILKINSON
SAFETY SHAVER

HAS solid sword steel blades that last, a roller guard which feeds the lather on to the cutting edge; these, together with the ratchet head, that enables the shaver to be adjusted to any angle, make shaving a delight, and save time.

Lasting Edge-Retaining Blades.

The Set complete with stropping handle and seven solid sword steel blades, each etched with a day of the week, contained in neat leather case **30/-**

Gold-plated, as above **50/-**

A combination Set, containing seven solid blades and new Automatic Stropping Machine, contained in neat leather case **45/-**

Gold-plated Set, as above **70/-**

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

THE WILKINSON SWORD CO., LTD.,
53, PALL MALL, LONDON, S.W.1.

Gun, Sword, and Equipment Makers, Razor Manufacturers.

Managing Director: T. H. RANDOLPH. Works: ACTON, W.3.

Introduce into your home a healthy, happy amusement—

"Riley" Billiards

You play as you pay—and Seven Days' Free Trial Guarantees your satisfaction.

To keep everyone keen on the game is something—to have every player, young or old, appreciative of the excitements and ironies, the flukes and the skilful strokes. But when the young people enjoy a game that is a grown-ups' game too, you have a great asset to the home circle. Such is "Riley Billiards"; for on a Riley "Home" Billiard Table the expert can make the most difficult strokes—exactly as on the full sized tables which Riley's supply, and on which the championships are played.

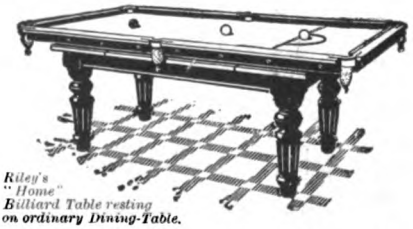
Riley's "Home" Billiard Tables

fit securely on any dining-table. Solid mahogany or oak, French polished, with best slate bed, low frost-proof cushions, crystalate balls, and all accessories included.

15/-

DOWN.

Send **15/-** postal order to us this evening, and within a few days the **£12 10s.** size RILEY "Home" Billiard Table (the most popular size) wil be despatched, carriage paid, to any address in the United Kingdom within a mile of a Railway Station. The remainder you pay in 17 monthly instalments of **15/-**. Any other price of Table in 18 equal monthly payments.



Riley's "Home" Billiard Table resting on ordinary Dining-Table.

Prices of Riley's "Home" Tables:

Size 4ft. 4in. × 2ft. 4in.	**£8 0s.**	*or in 18 monthly payments of*		**9/6**
„ 5ft. 4in. × 2ft. 10in.	**£10 0s.**			**11/9**
„ 6ft. 4in. × 3ft. 4in.	**£12 10s.**			**15/-**
„ 7ft. 4in. × 3ft. 10in.	**£17 0s.**			**20/6**
„ 8ft. 4in. × 4ft. 4in.	**£23 0s.**			**27/6**

Riley's "Combine" Billiard and Dining Tables

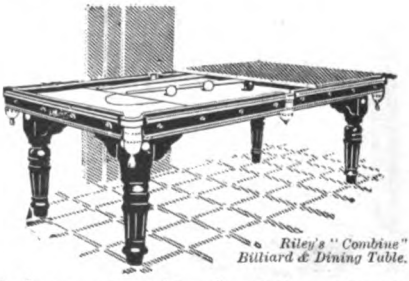
Handsome as a dining table and perfect as a Billiard Table. Solid mahogany; low frost-proof rubber cushions; best slate bed; patent automatic raising and lowering action. Dining-table top of polished oak or mahogany.

Every table sent complete and carriage paid on Seven Days' Free Trial.

There couldn't be a better guarantee of satisfaction than Riley's promise to accept the Table back if, after seven days' trial, you are dissatisfied. Send first instalment at once and *make this test quite free.*

FREE. **Send postcard to-day for full detailed Illustrated Catalogue of Billiard and Dining Tables, and "Home" or full-sized Tables.**

Riley's are makers of the well-known "Riley" Full-Size Tables. All repairs carried out, and accessories of every description supplied. Write for particulars.



Riley's "Combine" Billiard & Dining Table.

Prices of Riley's "Combine" Billiard and Dining Tables:

Size 5ft. 4in. × 2ft. 10in.	**£27 10 0**
„ 6ft. 4in. × 3ft. 4in.	**£32 10 0**
„ 7ft. 4in. × 3ft. 10in.	**£39 0 0**
„ 8ft. 4in. × 4ft. 4in.	**£49 0 0**
„ 9ft. 4in. × 4ft. 10in.	**£59 0 0**

Or in 13 or 20 monthly payments.

E. J. RILEY, Ltd. Crane Works, Accrington.

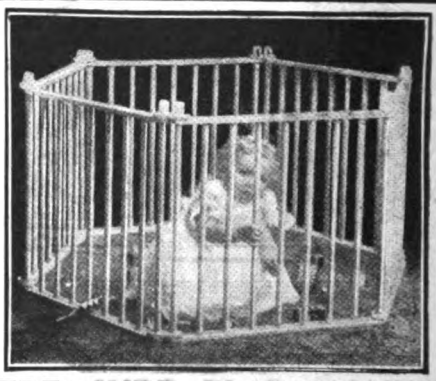
℗ *London Showrooms: 147, Aldersgate Street, E.C.*

FRESHNESS.

TO retain its fresh flavour, FRY'S Cocoa is given the utmost care in its packing. It is advisable to pay attention to this when choosing your cocoa.

Fry's Breakfast Pure Cocoa

Treasure Cot
Company LTD.



TREASURE PLAYGROUND

Hard Wood. Finished Smooth. 2 ft. high. Folds up.

PRICE **34/6** Six Sections.

Extra Sections, **6/-** each.

WASHABLE CRAWLING RUGS

Pink or Blue. **15/-** each.

Goods sent free on 7 days' appro., carriage paid in U.K.

Write for 50-page Illustrated Catalogue.
EVERYTHING FOR BABY AND NURSERY.

Treasure Cot Co., Ltd. (Dept. U.1), 124, Victoria St., London, S.W.1.

FREE
BIG CATALOGUE OF MONEY SAVING
CHINA BARGAINS
HUNDREDS OF DESIGNS IN ACTUAL COLORS
FOR ALL BUYERS

FREE GIFTS

HOUSEHOLD and Private Orders our **SPECIALITY.** Splendid Bargains in China, Pottery, and Glass. Tea Sets from **11/3.** Dinner Sets from **38/9.** Toilet Sets from **16/9.** Complete Home Outfits from **57/6.** **CATERING CROCKERY A SPECIALITY,** as supplied to "Daily Mail." Outfits for 50 Persons from **75/-.**

SPECIAL UNBREAKABLE QUALITY
China for Kitchen, Camp, Barrack, Hospital Use.

ONLY 28/9 PACKED FREE

This beautiful Tea Service, 12 persons, in charming Festoon design and Gold Finish. Splendid Quality. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Tea Service, 6 persons, **18/3.** Dinner Service, **39/3.**
The Leading Pottery Mail Order Merchants. *Established 1903.*
Over 50,000 Customers: Full Value and Satisfaction Guaranteed.

Send Postcard To-day for Complete ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE **FREE**
One Hundred Designs shown in Actual Colours.

CENTURY POTTERY Coy
ADVT. S.M.7. BURSLEM. STAFFS.

Children on the borderland of health.

An important announcement for parents.

(1) Children outgrowing their strength.

(2) Children not thriving or making up.

(3) Children weakly—not ill but never quite well.

(4) Eager, over-anxious school workers.

Within these classifications, children come too near the borderland of health. Parents should know the danger and how it may be avoided.

When children grow very rapidly, it frequently happens that the bodily demand for food is greater than the ability to digest it, or that more of certain food elements are required than the daily diet is supplying.

The anæmic and weakly backward condition—not quite ill-health, is medically described as "Malnutrition" and within the wide conditions covered by this word, the states of children in 1, 2, 3 and 4 all come. To overcome malnutrition, Doctors prescribe

BENGER'S Food

in addition to the ordinary food. A cupful between meals and at bed-time is of the utmost benefit. Benger's Food gives the extra bodily nutrition required, and is assimilated with ease. Some children like it flavoured by the addition of one or two small squares of chocolate.

Benger's Food is sold in Tins by Chemists, etc., everywhere.

Prices—Size No. 0—1/4; *Size No.* 1—2/3; *Size No.* 2—4/-; *Size No.* 3—8/6

Benger's 64-page Booklet deals with this and many of the problems of home nursing which mothers encounter. A copy may be obtained, post free, on application from

BENGER'S FOOD, LTD., —— Strangeways, —— MANCHESTER.

NEW YORK: 90, Beekman Street. SYDNEY: 117, Pitt Street. Depots throughout CANADA.

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The Housewife's greatest Christmas help—

'ATORA'

Refined BEEF SUET

very economical, most nutritious, so convenient.

"Atora" makes the lightest, daintiest puddings you ever tasted and makes them as nourishing as meat. Use 'Atora' for nourishing, sustaining puddings every day of the year.

Sold by all Grocers. SHREDDED ready for use in puddings, mince-meat, pastry, etc., in BLOCKS for frying and cooking.

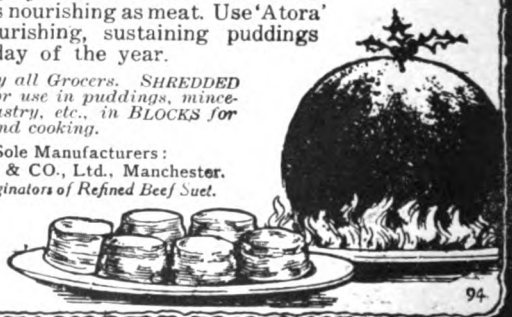
Sole Manufacturers:
HUGON & CO., Ltd., Manchester.
The Originators of Refined Beef Suet.

The best Recipe for your CHRISTMAS PUDDING

(Sufficient for 2 or 3 puddings).

½lb. Shredded Atora. 1lb Raisins 1lb. Currants. 1lb. Sultanas. ½lb Candied Peel. ¼ lb. Sugar. ¼ lb. Flour. 1 teaspoon Baking Powder. 4 Eggs. ¼ lb. Breadcrumbs. 2 oz. Sweet Almonds. A little Nutmeg. Rind and juice of 1 Lemon. Pinch of Salt. Enough Milk to make it right consistency.

Clean currants, stone raisins, put all the dry ingredients into a basin, blanch and chop almonds, add eggs, well-beaten, grated rind of lemon and juice strained. Mix thoroughly, put into greased pudding basins, cover with greased paper, steam for 6 hours.



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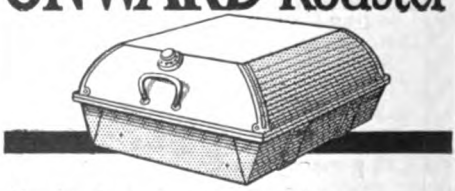
GREATEST BARGAIN OFFERED FOR YEARS.
THE CAXTON SERVICES.
DIRECT FROM THE POTTERIES
1 CRATE contents:
1 Dinner Set for 6 persons.
1 Tea Service for 6 persons.
1 Breakfast Set for 6 persons.
1 Set of Jugs (3).
ALL TO MATCH as here shown, in lovely shade of Blue. Also 3 Pie Dishes and 3 Pudding Bowls (var's sizes) Plain White.
75/- Packed free. Carriage Paid. **75/-**
The Safe delivery The Crate. Guaranteed. Crate. Money returned if not satisfied.
FREE GIFT. 6 Apostle Tea Spoons, E.P.N.S., with the first 500 Crates sold.
ART POTTERY ALBUM post free. 500 Illustrations, Glass, Cutlery, etc. Goods shipped to all parts of the world.
THE FENTON POTTERY CO. (Dept. 1), Royal Fenton Works, Fenton, Staffs. Estd. 1901.

You're a Perfect Cook

Earn a reputation for perfect cooking and keep it by using an "ONWARD" Roaster. The "ONWARD" ensures a well-cooked dish *every* time, and the way it makes tough old fowl as crisp and tender as a chicken is simply magical. There's no fear of a spoiled dinner if you use an "ONWARD." It cooks to a "turn."

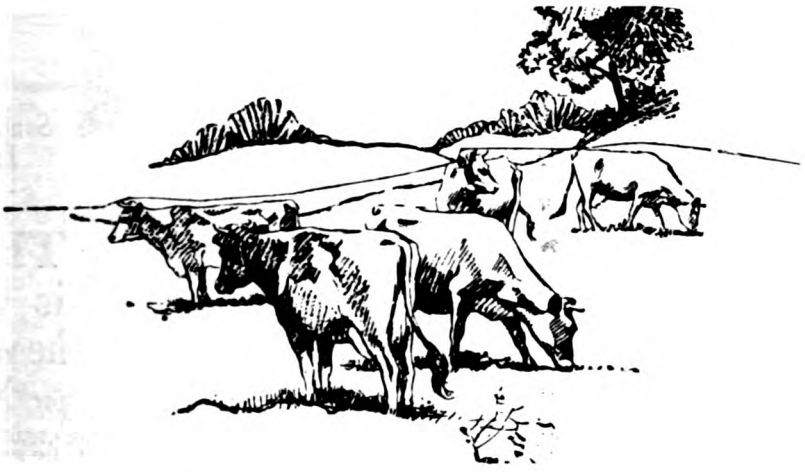
If your dealer cannot supply you, we will send you an "ONWARD" (size 12in. by 11in.) direct for 6/6 (carr. paid).

The **'ONWARD' Roaster**



May be obtained from any Ironmonger, or from Patentee and Sole Maker:

EDWIN CHAMBERS, LTD.,
"S" Dept., "Onward" Works, Leeds Rd., BRADFORD.



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Libby's Evaporated Milk comes to you fresh and pure because it is thoroughly sterilized and kept in hermetically sealed tins.

For cooking Libby's Evaporated Milk may be used as it comes from the tin wherever your recipe calls for *cream.* Where your recipe requires *milk,* dilute Libby's with a little more than an equal part of water.

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Lubrication.—Petroil System.

Carburettor.—Single Control. W.E.C. Patent.

Ignition.—Magneto.

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Ladies' Model £1 extra.

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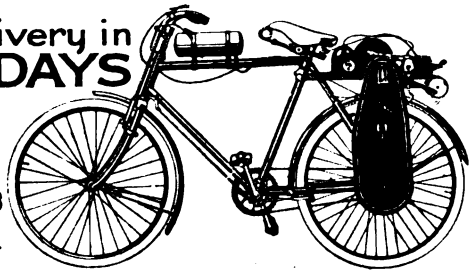

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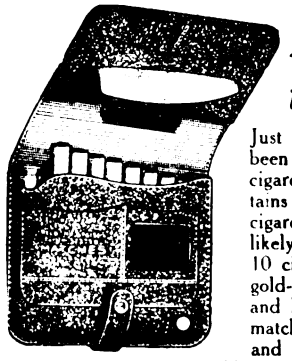

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We pay postage in the United Kingdom and refund your money if you are not entirely satisfied.

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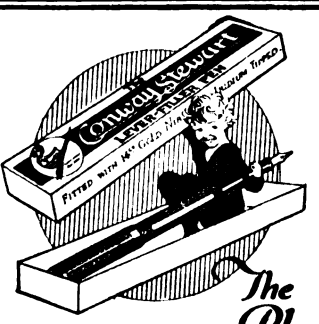

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WITH "Tyne Brand" Herrings in your larder, you are storing up for yourself not *one* new delicacy but *many*.

The two recipes below are just examples of the little ideas which famous chefs have had about "Tyne Brand." A few of these transforming touches—and the most "roving" palate will be satisfied.

Many more tempting dishes are described in the "Tyne Brand" Recipe Folder. Ask your Grocer for a copy—or write us direct.

Fish Mould with Mayonnaise Sauce.

Ingredients.—*1 small or half large tin "Tyne Brand" Herrings, 2 oz. ground rice, 1 pint milk, 1 oz. margarine, salt, pepper, and grated lemon rind to taste.*

METHOD.—Bring milk to the boil and stir in the ground rice, which has been mixed to a thin paste with a little cold milk, and continue to stir until it thickens. Add margarine and seasoning, boil for ten minutes, stirring all the time. Remove pan from fire; stir in the fish. Pour mixture, which should be quite stiff, into a wetted mould; leave till cold. Serve with Mayonnaise Sauce.

"Tyne Brand" Pasties.

Ingredients.—*½ lb. of paste, some cold boiled potatoes, a little onion and parsley, 2 slices of lean bacon either hot or cold, and 1 lb. tin of "Tyne Brand" Herrings.*

METHOD.—Roll paste out fairly thin as for a turnover. Place bacon on half of the paste, leaving the other half to turn back. Slice potatoes and chop onions and parsley finely. Place these on top of the bacon. Open a tin of "Tyne Brand" Herrings and turn out contents. Separate herrings and sauce. Place one or two herrings on turnover; fold back other half of paste to within ¼ inch of edge of covered portion. Slightly damp edges of paste, nip together in narrow frill. Cook in moderate oven till paste is crisp and brown. Make hole in top of pasty and pour tomato sauce into it (sauce may be slightly warmed in saucepan). Serve hot or cold.

Add Variety to the Everyday Menu

"DELICIOUSLY different" describes "Tyne Brand" Herrings more exactly than any other two words you could find. Plump, white-meated herrings, tender as chicken, their delicate flavour mellowed in a luscious sauce of red-ripe tomatoes!

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The New-Day Dentifrice

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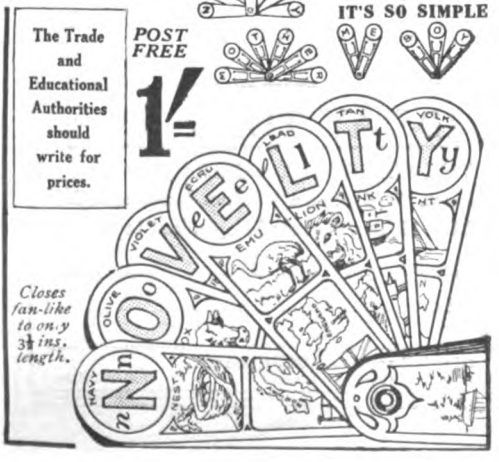

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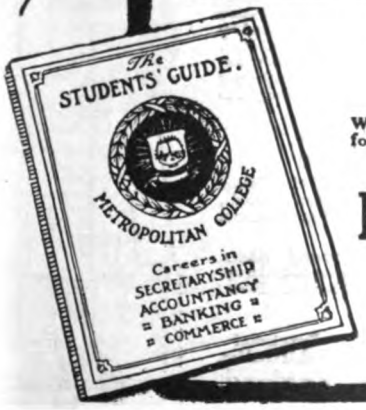

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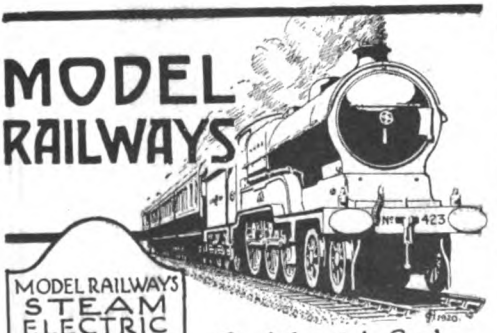

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To face page 34.

Photograph of Sybil Thorndike.

My Favourite Thrill!

"One of my most enjoyable experiences," writes Miss Sybil Thorndike, "was playing in 'The Christmas Carol' during the Dickens Festival at the Lyric Theatre.

"No writer ever knew more about human people than Dickens, nor wrote more understandingly of their loves and hates and their hopes and fears, and all his great art is concentrated in 'The Christmas Carol,' with its story of the healing of a misanthrope's soul.

"Both my children also appeared with me, and that circumstance gave added charm for me to what will always live in my memory as a favourite occasion.

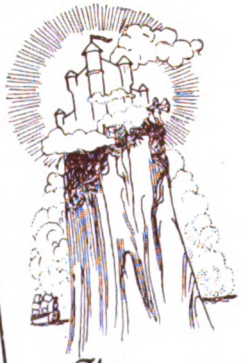
A Nursery Thrill!

"Domesticity has its thrills too, and one of them—one of the most delightful indeed—is to read to the children the fascinating fairy stories in Gibbs splendid Ivory Castle Fairy Book. Not only does it make one happy to see how the children hang breathless on every word, but one realises that all the time the cleverly told fairy tales are lessons in dental hygiene, which do an incalculable amount of good.

"Gibbs have published a fairy book as delightful in use and as fine in effect as their famous dentifrice."

Sybil Thorndike

Gibbs Dentifrice

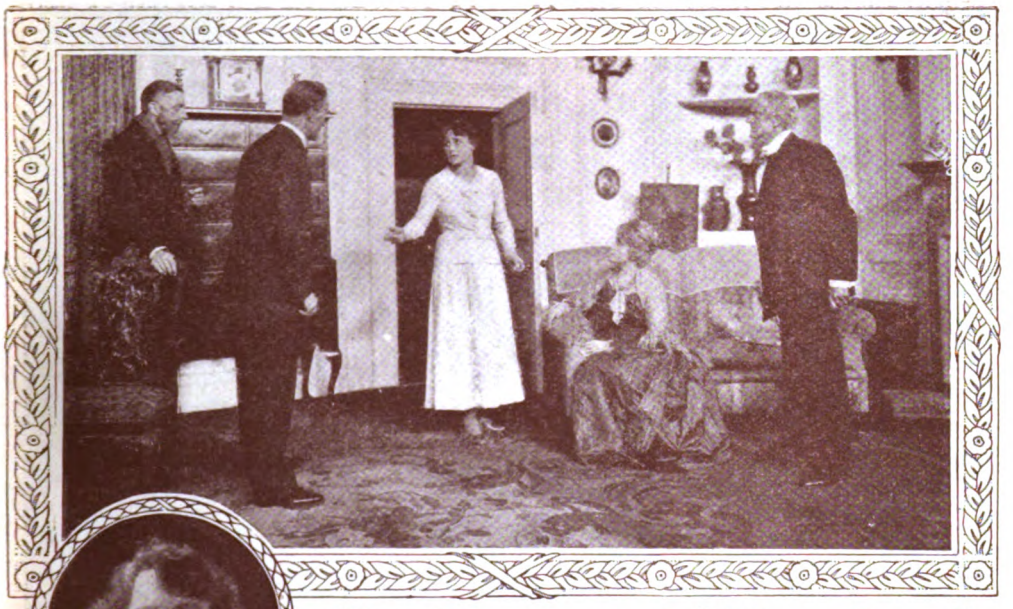


The Ivory Castle Fairy Book

The Ivory Castle Fairy Book—a fascinating series of ten charming stories—changes the little ones' night and morning task of tooth brushing into a splendid game in which all kinds of Fairies and Elves, Giants and Imps, take part.

Although this book is a costly production, full of quaint pictures, and well printed, a copy will be sent to you, together with a sample of Gibbs Dentifrice, absolutely free, on receipt of 2d. for postage and your name and address. Write to-day to

D. & W. GIBBS, LTD. (Dept. 1805), Cold Cream Soap Works, London, E.1.



The Mystery of "Mary Rose"

MARY ROSE is Miss Fay Compton's favourite part. Mary Rose—what mystery of purpose and mysticism of atmosphere the title conjures up. What opportunities for great acting there are in the part of the queer and elf-like child.

The mystic scene, eerie and breath-catching, in which Mary Rose departs from the life of her husband at the behest of the spirit voices on the enchanted island, the tense moment when returning she fails to recognise her husband, and there comes a cry from her soul for the baby whose childhood has passed, the heartbreaking last scene, where her spirit talks to her grown son, and then again departs.

"I must confess a penchant for beautiful perfumes," writes Miss Fay Compton, "and, undoubtedly, my favourites are those known as Courvoisier's. They seem to have captured the very soul of the flowers from which they are named. A wealth of fragrance and great refreshment is in every drop of Courvoisier's C. C. Perfumes."

Fay Compton.

It is as Miss Compton says : Courvoisier's C. C. Perfumes are the concentrated fragrance of the best-loved flowers, picked at the very moment of their sun-kissed perfection.

COURVOISIER'S 'C.C.' PERFUMES

Courvoisier's C. C. Perfumes can be had from all chemists and stores in—

Lily of the Valley, Violette de Parme, Jasmine, Sweet Pea, Carnation, Lilac,

and all other flower odours, at

3/9, 10/6, 20/- per Vial.

One drop from the perfuming rod spreads a wealth of fragrance.

BRONNLEY'S 'ESS VIOTTO' FOR THE HANDS and 'C. C.' PERFUMES are always valued XMAS GIFTS.

H. BRONNLEY & CO., Ltd., LONDON, W.3.

"The Speckled Band"

"The Speckled Band," lately revived at St. James's Theatre, was first produced in 1910 at the Adelphi Theatre. Of Mr. H. A. Saintsbury, whose favourite play it is, "Mordred," the dramatic critic of the *Referee*, wrote :—

"Mr. H. A. Saintsbury's study of Sherlock Holmes is the very picture of the famous detective . . . . all the salient attributes of the character, mental and physical, are reproduced to a nicety by the actor. The slim, sleek figure is the outward expression of the man Mr. Saintsbury represents—shrewd, alert, invincible!"

Mr. Saintsbury has repeated his initial success in the revival of the play, and won thousands more new admirers of his art and personality.

"An Observation Test"

"I have played Sherlock Holmes so many times," writes Mr. H. A. Saintsbury, "that it is not surprising that I have perhaps acquired some of his likings. One to which I must confess is my fondness for a comfortable armchair.

"It must be a roomy, deep armchair, such as lends itself to reverie and a pipe. Its covering is important—shrinking cretonnes will not do—leather wears out too soon, and the only ideal covering is 'Rexine' Brand Leathercloth. 'Rexine' has all the advantages of leather with none of its disadvantages. Albeit it is a real test of observation to tell the difference between the two, for 'Rexine' is made in all leather grains and colours perfectly instated. It costs a quarter of the price of leather, and is proof against all the hardships a careless man can inflict upon it."

H. A. Saintsbury

"Rexine" BRAND LEATHERCLOTH

THE REAL FURNITURE COVERING

The upholstering material of distinction.

A NIGHT OUT!

SOMEBODY once called me volatile. It isn't nearly so rude as it sounds, and it has the merit of being true. I like to be doing things quickly, and that's why "A Night Out" was sheer enjoyment for me to play in. From the first scene to the last it went with a rush—no lingering on leaden feet, but the tripping of dainty toes from scene to scene hurrying on to the laughable climax.

Full of comic situations and light and airy lines, "A Night Out" gave the comedian all the chances he wanted for the display of his art. But—it was hard work, believe me.

A NIGHT-CAP.

Stage life is no bed of roses. It is a life of hurry and anxiety and hard work. That is why many actors and actresses find "nerves" their worst affliction. Like most of my friends in the profession I have had a period of nervous trouble, and then, of course, that dread demon Insomnia has come along. Fortunately I have found the way to ensure a good night's rest always—just a "night-cap" cup of "Ovaltine" before I go to bed. And "Ovaltine" is, in addition, the best nerve and body-building beverage I know.

Leslie Henson

"Ovaltine" is the best food beverage because it supplies all the vitalizing and restorative elements required to build up the system.

The rich nerve and body-building elements contained in ripe barley malt, creamy milk, fresh eggs and cocoa are presented in "Ovaltine" in a highly concentrated form.

One cup of "Ovaltine" supplies more nourishment than 7 cups of cocoa, 12 cups of beef extract or 3 eggs. It is assimilated without digestive effort.

OVALTINE
TONIC FOOD BEVERAGE
Builds up Brain, Nerve and Body

Sold by all Chemists and Stores at 1/6, 2/6, *and* 4/6.

"The Maid of the Mountains."

"If habit becomes second nature," writes Miss José Collins, "then I must really be Teresa, for I played the part so long that I almost had a dual personality." A romantic story placed amid romantic surroundings, "The Maid of the Mountains" gave Miss José Collins special opportunities for her bewitching art. Her make-up as an olive-complexioned daughter of the South contrasted vividly with the pearly whiteness of her teeth.

A Morning Joy.

"No make-up can ever disguise bad teeth. It is therefore of the utmost importance to an actress to preserve the beauty of her teeth," says Miss José Collins.

"Tooth-cleaning is a morning joy since I discovered the Koh-i-noor Toothbrush. Tired to distraction of brushes that shed their bristles, softened and become useless, I tried Koh-i-noor. What a revelation of all that a toothbrush should be! No more toothbrush troubles. Now I can find real pleasure in what was once a wearisome duty."

José Collins

KOH-I-NOOR

The Ideal Tooth Brush

The Koh-i-noor is the *only complete series* of practical Toothbrushes. It comprises every pattern that has been proved of value in actual service. The models vary not only in shape and colour of shaft, *but in bristle arrangement*, and the numerous designs are based on sound scientific principles.

The only *safe* way to choose *the pattern made to fit your teeth* is to examine this complete Koh-i-noor range of six hygienic Brushes. In two qualities, at 2/6 and 3/-, from

ARMY & NAVY STORES, BARKERS, HARRODS, SELFRIDGE'S, WHITELEY'S, every branch of TAYLORS DRUG CO., PARKE'S DRUG STORES, and the leading Stores and Chemists throughout the country, including all branches of BOOTS CASH CHEMISTS, London and Provincial.

"My Nieces."

"'My Nieces' is my favourite production," says clever Binnie Hale. "It's so full of rollicking fun, and poor Mr. Ralph Lynn's predicaments are so amusing that even on the stage it is difficult to refrain from displaying one's mirth.

"The series of scrapes into which the author draws him, and in which I am one of the instruments of his embarrassment, are enough to turn a man's hair grey in a single night.

"But, thanks to the fact that the author is the arbiter of one's destiny on the stage, all comes right in the end, and nobody enjoys the fun and frolic more than I do."

"My Uncles."

"'My Nieces' makes me think of 'Uncles,'" continues Miss Binnie Hale. "All my uncles are strictly instructed that the only way to 'Uncle' properly is to present their niece at frequent intervals with large tins of Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe. They're all very efficient relatives in this respect, and that's why I'm such an expert on the subject of Mackintosh's — the toffiest toffee I've ever tasted. Have you tried it?"

Binnie Hale.

MACKINTOSH'S
Toffee-de-Luxe
—*the Quality Sweetmeat*

Sold in 4-lb. Family Tins, Small Tins, and loose by weight, by Confectioners everywhere.

Mackintosh's Toffee-de-Luxe has the largest sale in the world.

"WHEN I retire from the stage," said Mr. Alfred Lester, with a far away look in his eye, "I'm perhaps going to buy a little general store. I've always admired grocers and storekeepers.

What wonderful fellows they are! What courage they must have to be able to look angry housewives in the eye and tell them sugar's up again! And what men of strength they must be to control, as they do, the festive cheese and keep it under firm restraint! Yes, I'm a hero-worshipper in the matter of 'Grocing,' and that's why 'Simpson's Stores' is my favourite Playlet.

"There are two things essential to the complete enjoyment of a meal," says Mr. Alfred Lester, "a pretty companion and a bottle of 'O.K.' Both are piquant and appetising."

Alfred Lester

a rich thick sauce

with a wealth of flavour in a single drop

"O.K." SAUCE

"The Woman in the Case."

"The Woman in the Case" provided Miss Violet Vanbrugh with one of her greatest triumphs, and it is not surprising, therefore, that this great dramatic actress names it as her favourite play. A critic at the time said, "It would be impossible to over-estimate the value of Miss Violet Vanbrugh's performance. . . . Her representation (of Claire Forster) has the force and colour of a tropical thunderstorm, and yet it is never overdone. Miss Vanbrugh shows us the work of an accomplished artist." "A difficult rôle," says Miss Vanbrugh herself, "but one that I enjoyed from the first act to the last."

The Bon-Bon in the Box.

"Turning to the lighter things of life," writes Miss Violet Vanbrugh, "a great delight is dipping into a box of sweets—for choice, Pascall's Ambrosia Milk Chocolate Bon-Bons. They are quite the most delicious sweets I know, and are most nourishing, as I have often found when I have been playing a strenuous part. They have the haunting flavour of real Devonshire cream and the aroma of pure chocolate. They are, in fact, delicious."

Violet Vanbrugh

Pascall

AMBROSIA
DEVONSHIRE FULL CREAM
MILK CHOCOLATE

BON-BONS

1lb. Boxes 6/-, ½lb. box 3/-; also loose by weight.

JAMES PASCALL, LTD., LONDON, S.E.

Sold by Leading Wine and Spirit Merchants everywhere, and obtainable at Hotels and Clubs. Ask for and insist on having CONCORD.

W. H. CHAPLIN & CO., LTD.,
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LONDON, E.C.3.

"The Boy."

Mr. W. H. Berry had no hesitation in saying that "The Boy" was his favourite play.

This clever musical adaptation of Sir Arthur Pinero's "The Magistrate" certainly gave the famous comedian plenty of opportunities for the display of his inimitable art in the part of Mr. Meebles.

Mr. W. H. Berry gave to the comic scenes and numbers the full benefit of his humorous talent, and there are few playgoers who do not recall their visit to "The Boy" as a memorable night's entertainment. Tuneful and mirthful, "The Boy" wrote success large over the portals of the Adelphi, where it was produced, and where it ran for two years and three months.

"In Perfect Concord."

"'The Boy' was a play mellowed by the years," writes Mr. W. H. Berry, "and in that it was like my favourite Concord Port. I perfectly concord with all that is claimed for 'Concord.' It is a wine which adds the ultimate to the measure of the pleasure, and endows generously of its treasure of the zest for enjoyment. Could I only clink a glass with Omar, now of old, he would write a special Rubáiyát in its praise."

(SIGNED)

W. H. Berry

CONCORD PORT

"The Wrong Number."

A telephone call which was put through to a detective agency is the crux of most of the amusing "business" in "The Wrong Number," which Mlle. Yvonne Arnaud confesses is one of her favourite parts.

As Mrs. Rosalind Fessendon, a wife with much womanly wisdom and a keen sense of the strategies necessary to retain a husband's affection, Mlle. Yvonne Arnaud created a very engaging part and added another triumph to her many previous successes.

"The Right Choice."

With so many kinds of Chocolates offered in such tempting ways, I found it difficult to make "the right choice" until my introduction to the Orchard Basket, with its original selection of fresh fragrant fruits dipped in better-tasting Chocolate.

In a charming booklet, the originators make a strong claim of exclusiveness, but they are more than justified, for I must agree with them that the Chocolates contain more of the refreshing goodness of sun-kissed fruits than I ever considered possible.

Yvonne Arnaud

Black Boy

CHOCOLATES

We want 1,000 "Strand" Readers

to sample the favourite of Mlle. Yvonne Arnaud. It is an entirely original Chocolate confection, reproducing more of the refreshing goodness of the sun-kissed fruits of the world's orchards —Apricots, Peaches, Strawberries, Pine-apples, etc., etc.—than has ever been considered possible. And every confection is dipped in deliciously flavoured Chocolate.

We have prepared a beautiful Illustrated Booklet describing this and our other creations, and offering our "TESTA" selection at a special "Sampler" price. It is supplied free on receipt of a p.c. to any address.

As supply is limited to 1,000, requests will be dealt with in strict rotation. Send no money. Write to our Head Office:

BLACK BOY CHOCOLATE CO., LTD.,
Purity Works, Farleigh Road, Stoke Newington, N.16.

"Ring Up"

MISS MARIE BLANCHE was just going on in "Ring Up" when asked to name her favourite play.

"Why 'Ring Up' of course," she answered; "my favourite part is always the part I'm playing.

"The stage is the breath of life to me. If one has a nice part, well and good, but if one has been badly treated by the author, what matters it? One simply does one's best to make it worth while. If one succeeds, well, then, the joy of achievement is so much the greater." Part and player, however, are admirably suited in "Ring Up," and thousands have enjoyed the inimitable art of this fascinating actress.

Marie Blanche

Every Woman's Choice

"Every woman has a love for dainty underwear," writes Miss Marie Blanche. "They are also satisfied that the daintiest and most practical are 'Pesco' undies. And I heartily agree, for no underwear has ever approached in comfort, shape, fitting, and long service, the garments upon which I find the Pesco Trade Mark. I always wear 'Pesco,' and recommend it to all my friends."

Pesco

Ask for PESCO Scotch and Best

Trade UNSHRINKABLE PESCO FINISH *Mark*

Obtainable Everywhere.

In case of difficulty write to the makers for the names of nearest agents—

PETER SCOTT & CO., Ltd., Hawick, Scotland.

DRUMMER DYES

The Reliable Dye for all Fabrics

25 Colours **4d.** **EACH COMPLETE**

"The Peep Show."

"'The Peep Show' is as much a tonic to its players as to its audience," writes Miss Mona Vivian, whose clever work in revue has placed her in the forefront of the profession.

"Revue is inspiriting and free from the ordinary conventions of the stage," she continues, "and 'The Peep Show' is a particularly good example of what can be done when producer, author, and players combine in a spirit of harmony and gaiety to give a lively up-to-the-minute and beautiful entertainment. It is because 'The Peep Show' was conceived on these lines that I find it my favourite piece."

The Rainbow's Rival.

"That's what I call Drummer Dyes—'The Rainbow's Rival,'" writes Miss Mona Vivian. "Whenever I get tired of a jumper, a blouse, or a frock, I send my maid for a Drummer Dye and get busy. Hey, presto! in next to no time it is transformed into a joy of new loveliness. Absolutely ready for use—no trouble—twenty-five charming colours to choose from—and so sure to give a satisfactory result. That's why I always dye with Drummer." (Signed)

Mona Vivian

The 25 Drummer Colours:

Light Blue	Shell Pink	Daffodil
Saxe Blue	Pink	Tangerine
Royal Blue	Old Rose	Brown
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Myrtle	Rust	Grey
Emerald	Maroon	Purple
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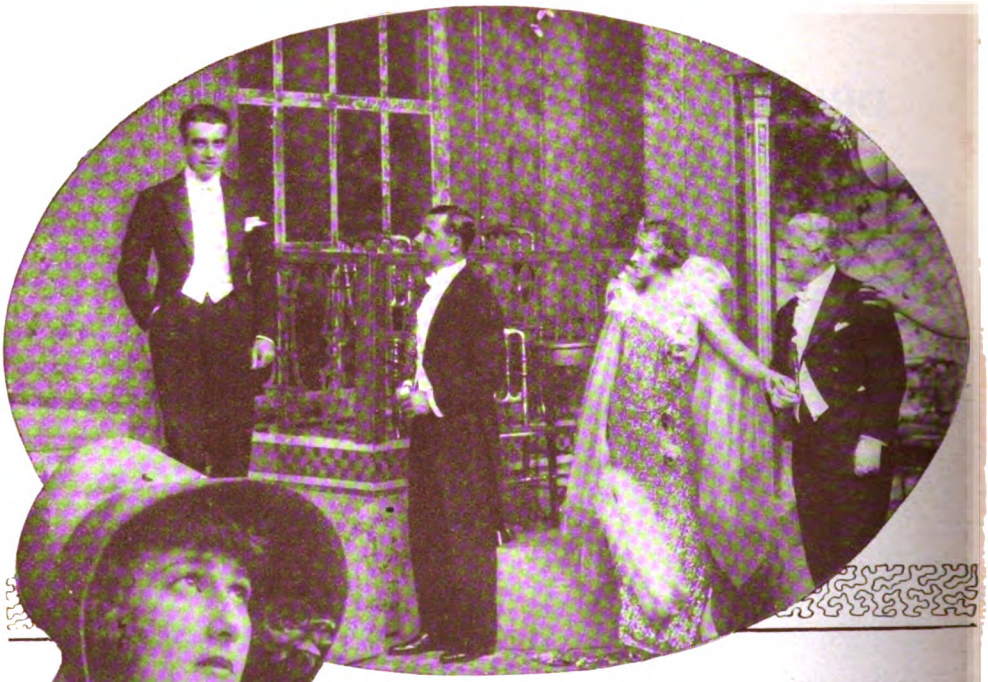

"The Gipsy Princess."

As the Countess Stasi in the popular play, "The Gipsy Princess," Miss Phyllis Titmuss found one of her favourite parts.

"The music, the dresses, the dancing were delightful," she says, "and I do not think I can mention any other play which gave—at any rate on my side of the footlights—more pleasure."

All who saw "The Gipsy Princess" will whole-heartedly agree with the verdict of this charming actress.

Pyjama Time.

"There is no next best thing about Horrockses' Undalene," writes Miss Phyllis Titmuss. "It is *the* best thing for slumber wear. For pyjamas and nighties I know no material more dainty and cosily warm and snug, and friends of mine with families tell me that it's the ideal day and night wear for youngsters as well as for grown-ups. To combine daintiness with sturdiness is the work of wearing genius, and Horrockses have undoubtedly accomplished it in 'Undalene.'"

Phyllis Titmuss.

Night or Day,
Work or Play,
Wear

Horrockses'

UNDALENE

"If Horrockses' name is on the selvedge—it's a guaranteed fabric."

"Carnival."

Mr. Matheson Lang is an actor-manager who does not tread the conventional path. He believes in blazing new histrionic trails, and to this trait much of his great success may be attributed. "Carnival," which he says is one of his favourite plays, is a case in point. To link the first act of "Pagliacci" with the last act of "Othello" in a "triangle" play was a stroke of genius. Mr. Matheson Lang's great sense of the theatre, his dominating personality and the beautiful timbre of his voice have never been displayed to greater advantage than in this impressively-produced play.

"Matutinal Memories."

"It would be easy to write a fascinating book about shaving," writes Mr. Matheson Lang. "I would call it 'Matutinal Memories,' and some of them would be quite as harrowing as Grand Guignol plays. I remember mornings of pain and bloodshed when the bathroom was incarnadined—but that was before I found a friend in Clemak. Clemak is a safety razor that can be handled by the most careless shaver without fear. The only matutinal memory it leaves behind is a sense of ease, comfort, and effortless removal of the heaviest chin stubble. Clemak is the only razor for me."

Matheson Lang.

CLEMAK
Safety Razor

Minute to Strop

Moment to Clean

"The Shop Girl"

"The Shop Girl," originally produced under the management of Mr. George Edwardes at the Gaiety Theatre in 1894, was revived in March last year. Miss Evelyn Laye, who has in a short time become one of our most popular musical comedy actresses, says it is her favourite piece, "because it is so full of whole-hearted fun and toe-twinkling tunes; because it enjoyed a splendid run before the most appreciative audience one could wish for—a London audience, and, above all, a Gaiety audience."

Fashion's Foundation

Miss Evelyn Laye, Leading Lady at the Pavilion, has the reputation of being one of the best dressed women on the stage. Her gowns, always in the forefront of fashion and the best taste, admirably set off a figure of perfect contour.

"The foundation of fashionable dressing," she writes, "is perfect corseting, and I find nothing to compare with the famous J.B. Masterfront Side Spring Corsets.

"The double front-lacing which is a feature of them gives extra comfort and exactly the right outline. The designers of these corsets seem to have an uncanny prevision of coming modes, and know exactly how to design a corset that moulds the figure to the right lines while ensuring absolute comfort and healthful support."

Evelyn Laye

J.B. Masterfront SIDE SPRING CORSETS

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JAMES S. BLAIR & SON,
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Model 1600, 21/-

Cheaper Quality, Model 1500, 15/11

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To see oursels as others see us"

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"Colleen keeps Complexions Clear"

The Wrapper is Green.

THE soft-as velvet lather of McClinton's Colleen Soap cleanses the most delicate skin without injury. Made from fresh sweet vegetable oils and plant ash, Colleen is entirely free from animal fat and harsh mineral alkali That is why beautiful women everywhere use Colleen—"the soap that is kind to your skin."

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Colleen Soap

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Per Tablet, 7d.
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VITAMINES IN THEIR MOST ACTIVE FORM

MANY white-faced, ailing children (and adults, too) are really starving to death. Their food lacks sufficient vitamines for their particular constitution —they need vitamines as urgently as a drowning man needs air! This is proved by recent official Biological investigation.

Vitmar is rich in vitamines and acts instantly in all cases of malnutrition, rickets and nervous weakness in children, and is invaluable for invalids, nursing and expectant Mothers, and for the aged.

Manufactured by a delicate process from wheat, beef-fat, eggs, fruit and sugar, Vitmar is as sweet, fruity and pleasant as a delicate confection.

Children take it with avidity, and at once start to put on weight and grow robust and strong. "It acts like magic!"

FREE: Write for interesting Vitmar Book and sample Jar (enclose 3d. for postage).

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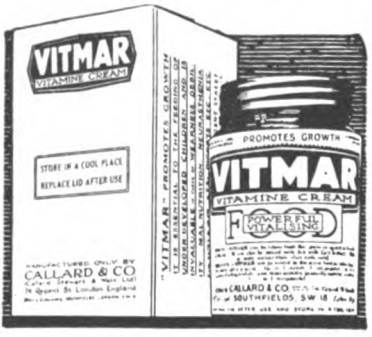
VITAMINE CREAM

FOOD
POWERFUL VITALISING

In Jars, at all Chemists,
2/3, 4/3 and 8/-



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S.M.3

ADVANCING age has a wise regard for foot comfort in days of rain. Chills and colds come readily — and linger — unless footwear soundly protects against damp feet.

So those who know always make sure their boots and shoes are "DRI-PED" Soled. It is waterproof—absolutely—showerproof, downpour-proof, puddle-proof. You cannot wear "DRI-PED" Soles and have wet feet.

And "DRI-PED" wears t-w-i-c-e as long as best ordinary Sole Leather. Think what a saving this means on the family footwear and footwear repair bills.

Hundreds of thousands walk with confidence and comfort in "DRI-PED" soled boots and shoes. See the new Dri-ped Soled Footwear in all styles and sizes for men, women, and children—your dealer stocks. Always insist on "DRI-PED" for repairs.

¶ **"DRI-PED" is leather—the world's best Sole Leather—scientifically tanned by an exclusive process.**

Be sure the next pair of shoes you buy have "DRI-PED" soles. When taking the shoes you are now wearing for repair, ask to have them soled with "DRI-PED."

DRI-PED
REG^D

The Super Leather for Soles.

CAUTION.—*There is no unstamped "Dri-ped." All genuine "Dri-ped" bears the "Dri-ped" Diamond stamp in purple every few inches on each sole. Refuse subterfuges. Report cases of substitution to the proprietors,*
Dri-ped, Ltd., Bolton, Lancashire.

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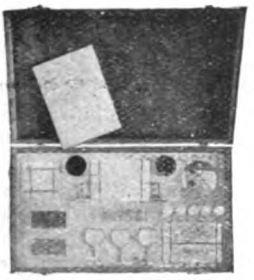

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Don't miss the Fun

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Wonderful, real working, Hydraulic, Civil Engineering, Magnetic Outfits in your own home.

EVERY boy who gets hold of a Gilbert Engineering and Scientific Set starts right away to do things in real earnest.

Gilbert Toys take the difficulty out of Science, but leave all the fascination. They show you things in a way you can understand them and do them quite easily. The dull part goes, the fun remains. Every Set has a manual written in clear and simple language for boys.

These Sets are genuine, with proper working apparatus. They put you in touch with the big things that are going on in the Scientific and Engineering world.

Get a Set and begin now to be an Engineer. If you cannot obtain these Sets direct from your dealer, we will supply you.

There are over 100 other Gilbert Outfits on sale at all the best Stores and Toyshops throughout the Country. If you have any difficulty in obtaining them, write us for address of nearest dealer and copy of Boy's Magazine. Post free from the

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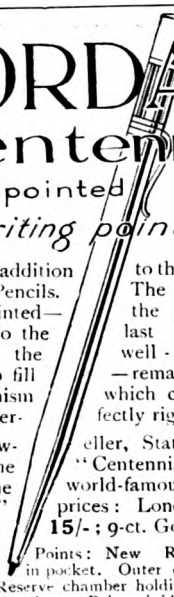
MORDAN'S "Centennial"

Everpointed Pencil

Rigid writing point - always



THE latest addition to the famous family of Mordan Pencils. The "Centennial" is truly ever-pointed—the point remains a point down to the last shred of lead. Finished in the well-known Mordan style—easy to fill—remarkably simple internal mechanism which cannot get out of order—a perfectly rigid writing point.

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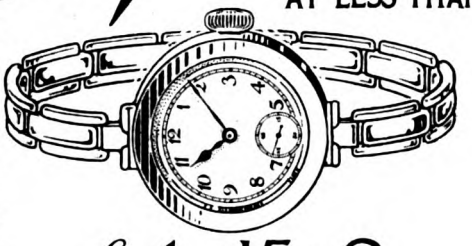

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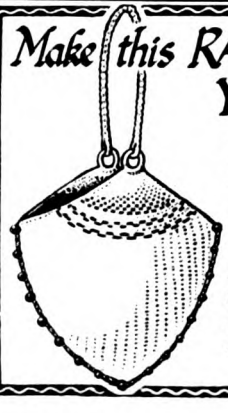

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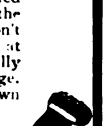

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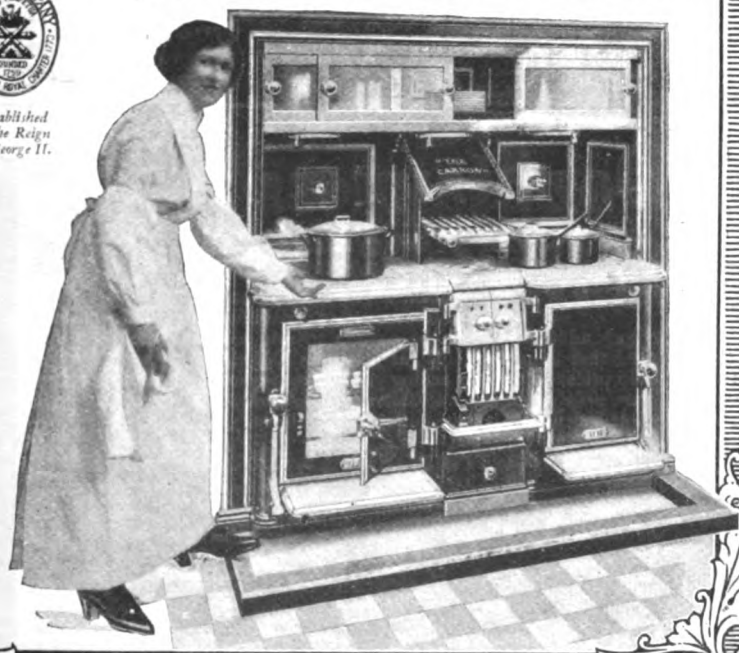

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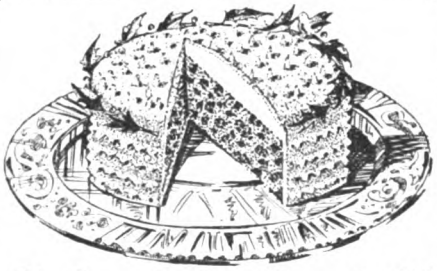

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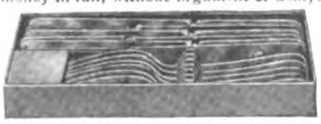

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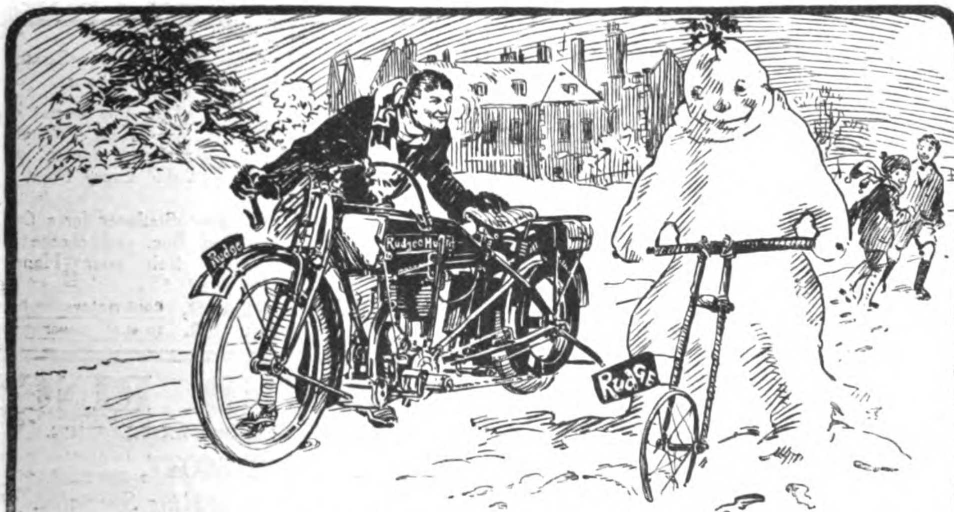

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H.M KING GEORGE

I CURE WEAK NERVES!

I cordially invite every reader of the STRAND MAGAZINE who suffers from nerve weakness or ill-health of any description to write at once for my FREE BOOK on nerve trouble.

I can positively cure sleeplessness, the worry habit, irritability, palpitation, sudden exhaustion, heaviness of limbs, or, in fact, any HEART, NERVE, or STOMACH TROUBLE.

If you are pessimistic, lacking in ambition, or without the energy to carry out your ambitions or perform your work satisfactorily, if everything seems a trial and a care instead of a joy and pleasure, it is a sure sign that you have become *neurasthenic*. In such case, you cannot possibly become the social or business success you were meant to be until you have regained health and fitness.

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I hold thousands of testimonials from patients who could not last through an entertainment or stay in a crowd until they came to me. My treatment was put to a severe test during the war with numbers of shell-shock cases—the worst form of neurasthenia it is possible to have.

Remember, without treatment, nerve trouble usually ends in a nervous breakdown, after which a cure is more difficult to obtain.

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I hold extraordinary testimonials from pupils over the age of sixty as to the wonderful rejuvenating powers of my treatment. I can add years to the life of all middle-aged patients, and at the same time give them renewed vigour. All letters treated in strict confidence. No charge for diagnosis or opinion.

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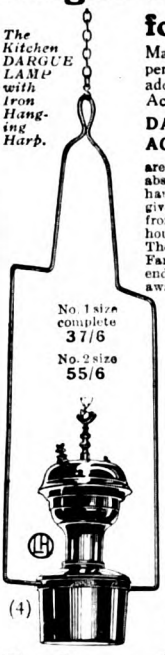

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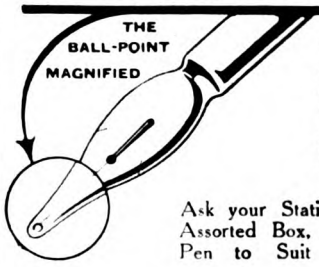

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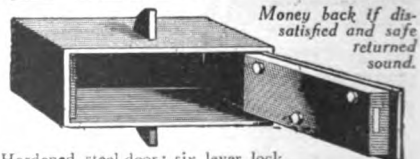

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This ingenious little patented invention is **all the rage.** 70,000 have been sold in a few weeks. And no wonder! Send for one to-day, or get one from your hatter or hosier and see **what a miracle it works** with your misshapen soft or velour hat. The West Hat Grip takes the pressure of the thumb and fingers when you raise or remove your hat, instantly springing back when released. The **original shape and smart appearance of the hat are preserved**, and it looks always new instead of creased and shapeless. Users are extraordinarily enthusiastic, and there is a steady flow of repeat orders from those who are buying for their friends. If you see one, you want one!

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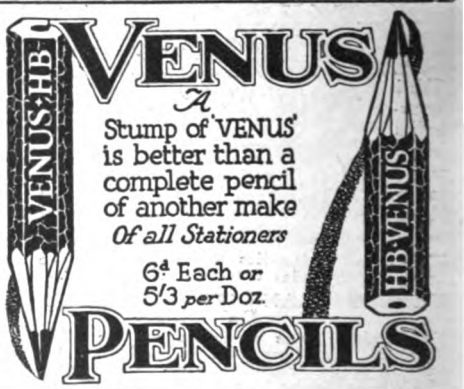

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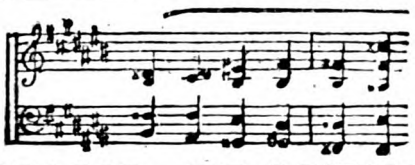

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Invisible Fused Bifocals.

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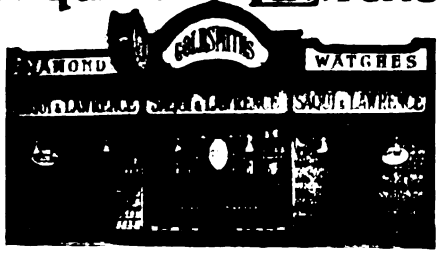

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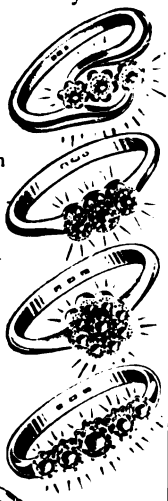

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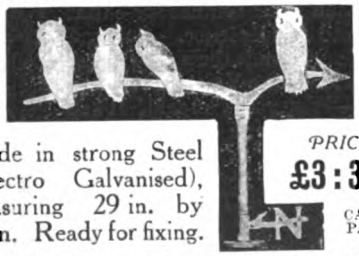

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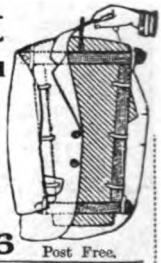

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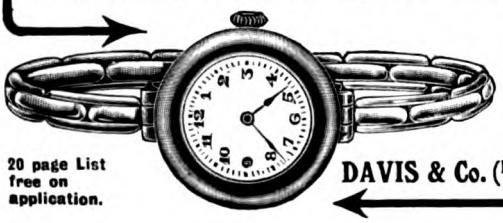

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£3/12/6 **Lady's** £12/12/- handsome **Solid Gold** English hall-marked **Keyless Expanding Watch Bracelet;** highly finished movement with all the most modern improvements; unbreakable mainspring; timed to half a minute a month; solid gold extension to fit and grip any wrist; a beautifully made Watch Bracelet in every particular; 15 years' warranty; week's free trial; sacrifice, £3/12/6; approval before payment with pleasure.

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All packed in 1 and 2 oz. lead packets and larger tins, and sold by good class tobacconists and stores at 1/1 an ounce.

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Clogged, sluggish, and congested liver, kidneys or intestines, with the attendant rheumatism, languor, biliousness, defective vision, catarrh, indigestion, and impure blood, should never be neglected. They mean constipation, "the beginning of all disease," for dangerous toxins are then being constantly absorbed straight into the blood, although sufferers seldom even suspect the real cause of all their troubles. Powerful mixtures and drugs like calomel (mercury) may irritate the liver to convulsive action, but do not stop adherence to walls of the intestines, nor cleanse and strengthen the delicate network of secretory ducts and absorbent glands. For this latter purpose doctors agree there is no solvent, cleansing and blood-purifying agent equal to the deposits of certain natural medicinal waters. These deposits are obtainable at slight cost from any chemist as pure *refined* Alkia Saltrates. Take before breakfast a level teaspoonful of this pleasant-tasting compound in a half tumbler of water, and notice how all symptoms of rheumatic or other body poisons vanish *within two or three days*, and you begin to enjoy life as Nature intended. Mental effort and concentration become easy again, hard work a pleasure, and any pain or constant tired feeling will disappear. Even gall-stone or other painful concretions of sharp uric acid crystals and impure mineral salts may thus be dissolved. Avoid all strong cathartic pills, patent medicines, lowering salts, drugs or highly-alcoholic stimulants, eat moderately, and drink occasionally a little saltrated water—Nature's own blood clarifier, uric acid solvent and eliminant of all impurities—then you need never fear a recurrence.—A.L.

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HAND-SEWN PELTS WITH THE NATURAL FLEECE INSIDE.

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you will say after just one golden piece! After the twentieth piece, you will repeat it just as emphatically. Each piece is as delicious, as rich, smooth, and creamy in flavour as the last. Take some home with you to-day. The Best Toffee obtainable. If any difficulty is experienced in obtaining, please send us name and address of your confectioner.

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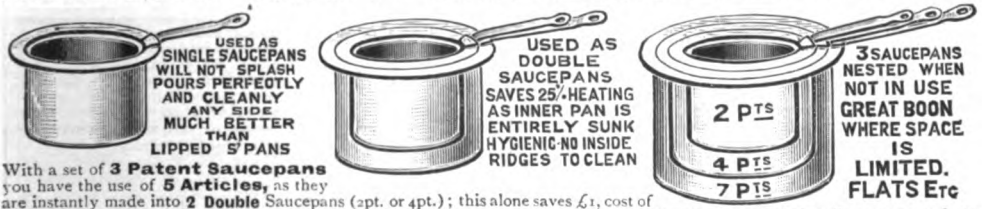

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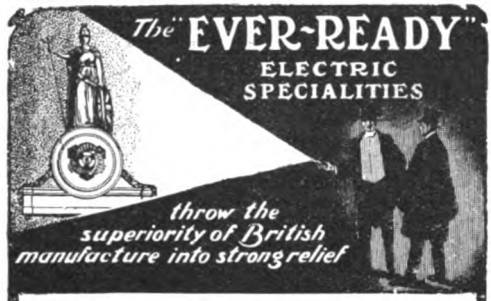

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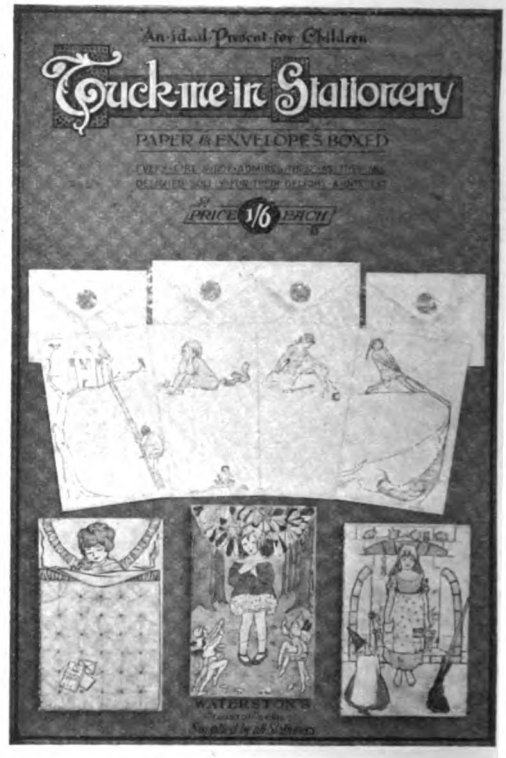

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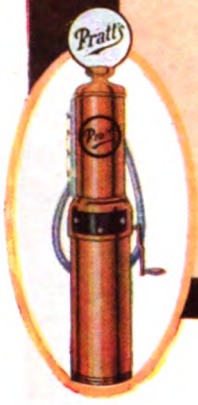

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"Look at old Golly a'miring his self in the Table. He thinks it's a looking glass 'cause it's polished with Mansion Polish."
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Evans' Pastilles are the surest safeguard you can have. For Evans' Antiseptic Throat Pastilles, made to a formula of the Liverpool Throat Hospital, act as an effective precautionary measure against bronchial ailments and the microbes of Influenza, Catarrh, etc.

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Have you tired of practising? Does further progress seem impossible? An organised scheme of modern study will quickly make the average player a brilliant pianist, and by the application of modern "WEIGHT TOUCH" principles, TONE can be immensely improved. For 20 years I have studied the best players and have adopted after rigid scrutiny the best points of their methods, and my ability to understand the difficulties of students enables me to train all pupils as effectively by Correspondence as by private lessons. One of my Correspondence pupils, an L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M., writes:—

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Under the Charles A. Gillett method, the minimum practice produces the maximum results; however short your time for practice, you can make rapid progress. The application of Arm Balance and Relaxation is fully dealt with, which will enable you to produce that full, sonorous tone that marks the artist at the piano. The CHARLES A. GILLETT Advanced Course deals with every branch of the Art—Sight Reading, Memorising, Finger-work, Rhythm, Phrasing, etc., whilst the **Beginners' Course commences with the fundaments of piano playing, and by the use of my specialised method quickly leads to the actual playing of simple pieces.**

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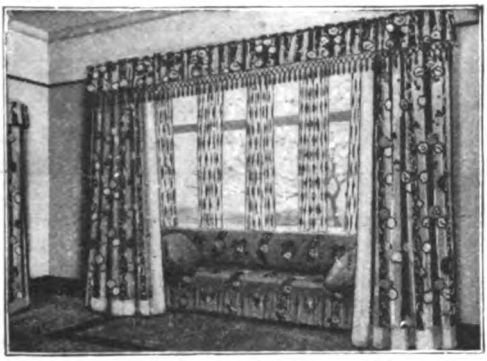

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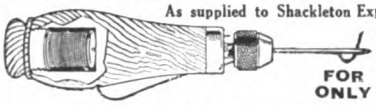

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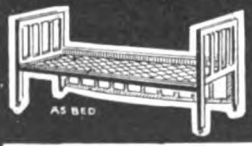

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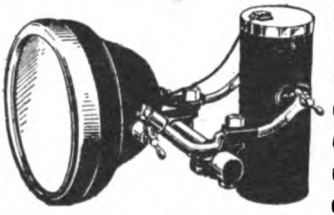

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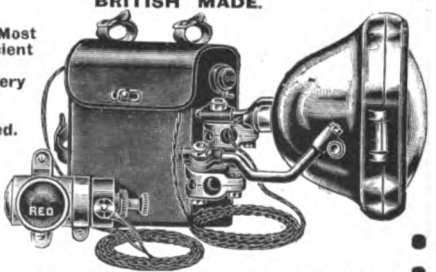

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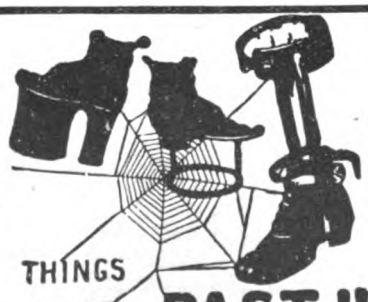

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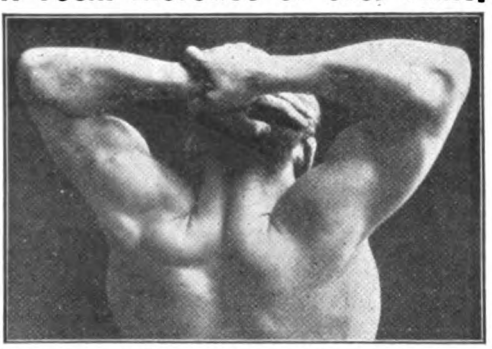
A Total Increase of over 12ins.



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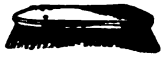

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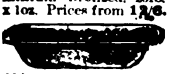

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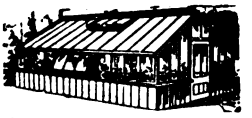

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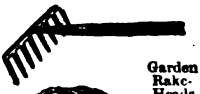

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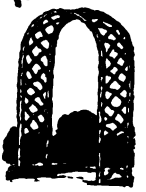

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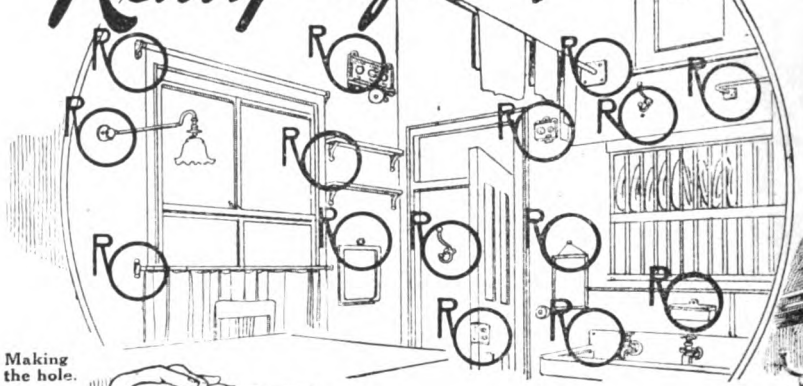


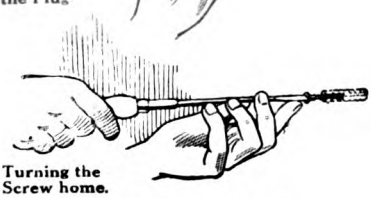
The Old Method

Making the hole.

A Unique Present for Christmas or New Year.

Inserting the Plug

Turning the Screw home.



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containing 50 Rawlplugs, 50 screws, Rawlplug Tool and full instructions. **3/6**

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The Strand Magazine.

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE is printed by The Cornwall Press, Ltd., and published monthly by the Proprietors, George Newnes, Limited, 8 to 11, Southampton Street, Strand, London, England. Subscription price to any part of the world, post free, for one year, 15s. (Canada, 14s.). Registered at the General Post Office for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y., Post Office. Cases for binding volumes of THE STRAND MAGAZINE may be obtained to order from Booksellers for 3s., or post free for 3s. 4d. direct from the Office. Half-yearly Volumes, 7s. 6d. net.

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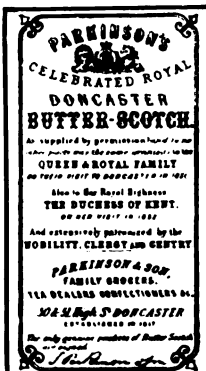

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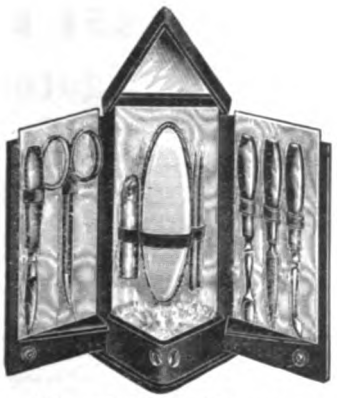

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Over-all Size, 2½" x 2¼" x 5¼" high.

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and what a joyful spirit it is—everybody full of mirth, tables loaded with good things, and best of all the giving and receiving of presents.

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P. 951

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To face back of Frontispiece.

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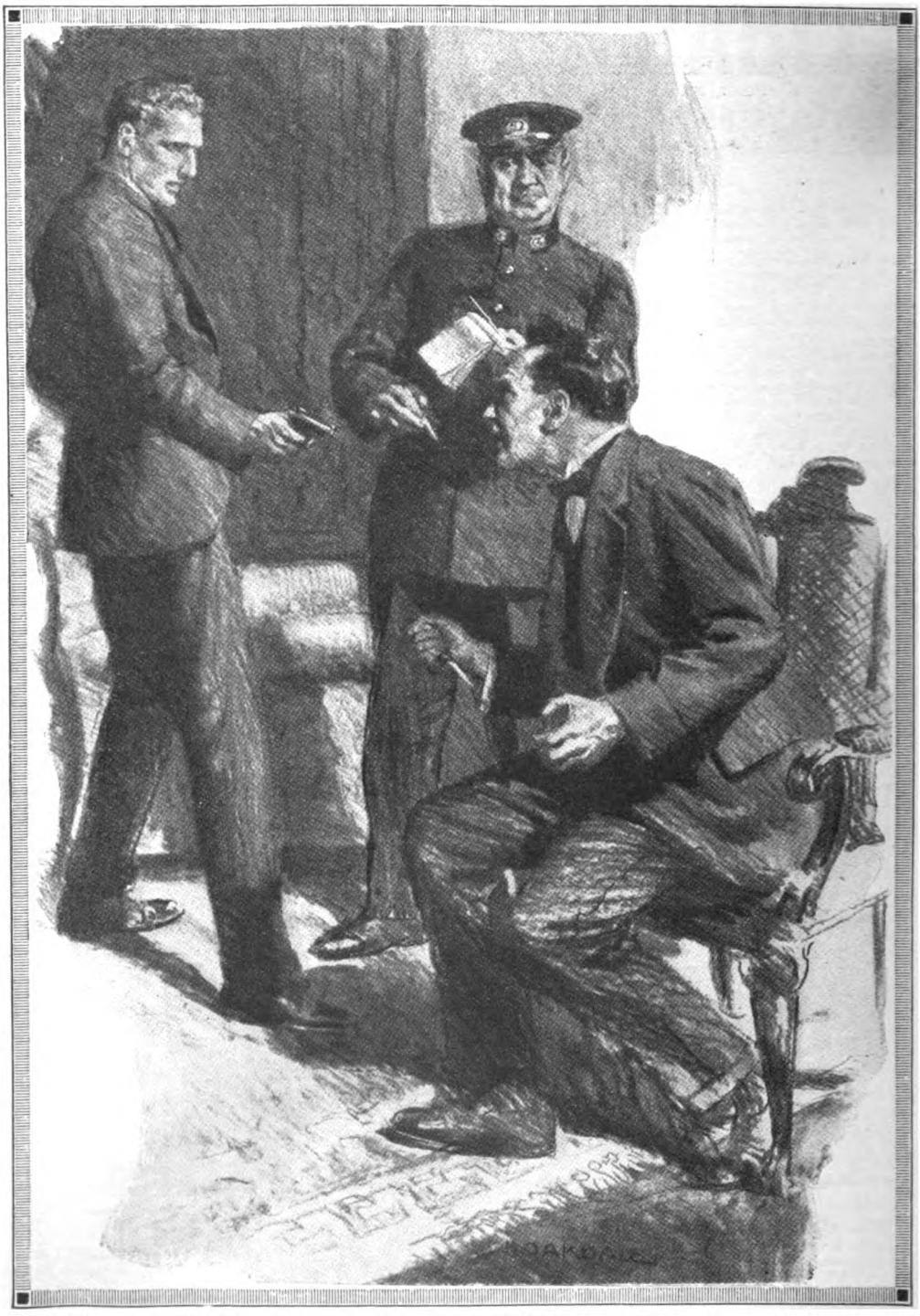
December, 1921.



"WITH A SUDDEN CURSE THE CORSICAN WHIPPED OUT A KNIFE AND SPRANG AT ME. BUT I'D BEEN EXPECTING SOME SUCH MOVE, AND I'D GOT A REVOLVER HANDY." (*See page* 481.)

A GLASS OF WHISKY

BY

"SAPPER"
(H.C. McNeile)

ILLUSTRATED BY E.G. OAKDALE

"IT'S as easy as shelling peas to be a detective in fiction," grunted the Barrister. "He's merely the author of the yarn disguised as a character, and he knows the solution before he starts."

"But the reader doesn't, if the story is told well," objected the Doctor. "And that's all that matters."

"Oh! I grant you that," said the Barrister, lighting a cigar. "I'm not inveighing against the detective story—I love 'em. All I'm saying is that in life a detective's job is a very different matter to—well, take the illustrious example—to that of Sherlock Holmes. He's got to make the crime fit to the clues, not the clues fit into the crime. It's not so terribly difficult to reconstruct the murder of the Prime Minister from a piece of charred paper discovered in the railway refreshment-room at Bath—in fiction; it's altogether a different matter in reality."

The Soldier thoughtfully filled his pipe.

"And yet there have been many cases when the reconstruction has been made on some clue almost equally 'flimsy,'" he murmured.

"A few," conceded the Barrister. "But nine out of ten are built up with laborious care. The structure does not rest on any one fact—but on a whole lot of apparently unimportant and trivial ones. Of course it's more spectacular to bring a man to the gallows because half a brick was found lying on the front door-step, but in practice it doesn't happen."

"It does—sometimes," remarked a quiet, sandy-haired man who was helping himself to a whisky-and-soda. "It does sometimes, you man of law. Your remarks coupled with my present occupation remind me of just such a case."

"Your present occupation appears to be drinking whisky," said the Doctor, curiously.

"Precisely," returned the other. "Almost as prosaic a thing as our legal luminary's half-brick." He settled himself comfortably in a chair, and the others leaned forward expectantly. "And yet on that very ordinary pastime hinged an extremely interesting case: one in which I was lucky enough to play a principal part."

"The night is yet young, old man," said the Barrister. "It's up to you to prove your words, and duly confound me."

The sandy-haired man took a sip of his drink: then he put the glass on the table beside him and began.

WELL, if it won't bore you, I'm agreeable. I'll tell you the whole thing exactly as it took place, only altering the names of the people involved. It happened before the war—in that hot summer of 1911, to be exact. I'd been working pretty hard in London, and about the end of July I got an invitation to go down and stop with some people in Devonshire. I will call them the Marleys, and they lived just outside a small village on the north coast. The family consisted of old Marley, who was a man rising sixty, and his two daughters, Joan and Hilda. There was also Jack Fairfax, through whom, as a matter of fact, I had first got to know them.

Jack was about my own age—thirty odd, and we'd been up at Cambridge together. He was no relation to old Marley, but he was an orphan, and Marley was his guardian, or had been when Jack was a youngster. And from the very first Jack and the old man had not got on.

Marley was not everybody's meat, by a long way—rather a queer-tempered, secretive blighter; and Jack Fairfax had the devil of a temper at times. When he was a boy he had no alternative except to do as his guardian told him, but even in those early days, as I gathered subsequently, there had been frequent storms. And when he came down from Cambridge there were two or three most unholy rows which culminated in Jack leaving the house for good.

It was apparently this severance from

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the two girls, whom before he had more or less regarded as sisters, which caused the next bust-up. And this one, according to Jack, was in the nature of a volcanic eruption. The two girls had come up to London to go through the season with some aunt, and Jack had seen a good deal of them, with the net result that he and Joan had fallen in love with one another. Then the fat was in the fire. Jack straightway had gone down to Devonshire to ask old Marley's consent: old Marley had replied in terms which, judging from Jack's account of the interview, had contained a positive profusion of unParliamentary epithets. Jack had lost his temper properly—and, well, you know, the usual thing. At any rate, the long and the short of it was that old Marley had recalled both his daughters from London, and had sworn that if he ever saw Jack near the house again he'd pepper him with a shot-gun. To which Jack had replied that only his grey hairs and his gout saved Mr. Marley from the biggest hiding he'd ever had in his life—even if not the biggest he'd deserved. With which genial exchange of playful badinage I gathered the interview ended. And that was how matters stood when I went down in July, 1911.

"I swung round in my chair, to find a man standing on the lawn outside, in

For some peculiar reason the old man liked me, even though I was a friend of Jack's. And in many ways I quite liked him, though there was always something about him which defeated me. Of course, he had a foul temper—but it wasn't altogether that. He seemed to me at times to be in fear of something or somebody; and yet, though I say that now, I don't know that I went as far as thinking so at the time. It was an almost indefinable impression—vague and yet very real.

The two girls were perfectly charming, though they were both a little afraid of their father. How long it would have taken Joan to overcome this timidity, and go to Jack without her father's consent, I don't know. And incidentally, as our legislators say, the question did not arise. Fate held the ace of trumps, and proceeded to deal it during my visit.

the centre of the light. 'Might I have a word with you alone, sir?' he said.'

The sandy-haired man leant back in his chair and crossed his legs deliberately.

I think it was about the fourth day after I arrived (he went on, after a while) that the tragedy happened. We were sitting in the drawing-room after dinner—a couple of men whose names I forget, and a girl friend of Hilda's. Hilda herself was there, and Joan, who seemed very preoccupied, had

come in about a quarter of an hour previously. I had noticed that Hilda had looked at her sister inquiringly as she entered, and that Joan had shrugged her shoulders. But nothing had been said, and naturally I asked no questions with the others there, though from the air of suppressed excitement on Joan's face I knew there was something in the wind.

Old Marley himself was not with us: he was in his study at the other end of the house. The fact was not at all unusual: he frequently retired to his own den after dinner, sometimes joining the rest of the party for a few minutes before going to bed, more often not appearing again till the following morning. And so we all sat there talking idly, with the windows wide open and the light shining out on to the lawn. It must have been somewhere about ten to a quarter past when suddenly Hilda gave a little scream.

"What do you want?" she cried. "Who are you?"

I swung round in my chair, to find a man standing on the lawn outside, in the centre of the light. He was facing us, and as we stared at him he came nearer till he was almost in the room. And the first thing that struck me was that he looked a little agitated.

"You will excuse me appearing like this," he said, "but——" He broke off and looked at me. "Might I have a word with you alone, sir?"

I glanced at the others: obviously he was a stranger. No trace of recognition appeared on anyone's face, and I began to feel a little suspicious.

"What is it?" I cried. "What can you possibly want to speak to me about that you can't say now?"

He shrugged his shoulders slightly. "As you will," he answered. "My idea was to avoid frightening the ladies. In the room at the other end of the house a man has been murdered."

For a moment everyone was too thunderstruck to reply; then Hilda gave a choking cry.

"What sort of a man?" she said, breathlessly.

"An elderly man of, I should think, about sixty," returned the other, gravely, and Hilda buried her face in her hands.

"I will come with you at once, sir," I said, hurriedly, and the two other men rose. Instinctively, I think, we all knew it must be old Marley: there was no one else it could be. But the sudden shock of it had dazed us all. I glanced at Joan. She was staring at the man like a girl bereft of her senses, and I put my hand reassuringly on her shoulder. And then she looked up at me, and the expression in her eyes pulled me together. It was like a cold douche, and it acted instantaneously. Because it wasn't horror or dazed stupefaction that I read on her face: it was terror—agonized terror. And suddenly I remembered her air of suppressed excitement earlier in the evening.

ONCE again the sandy-haired man paused while the others waited in silence for him to continue.

It was old Marley right enough (he went on, quietly). We walked round the front of the house until we came to the window of his study, and there instinctively we paused. The window was open, and he was sitting at his desk quite motionless. His head had fallen forward, and on his face was a look of dreadful fear.

For a while none of us moved. Then, with an effort, I threw my leg over the window-sill and entered.

"He's quite dead," I said, and I felt my voice was shaking. "We'd better send for the police."

The others nodded, and in silence I picked up the telephone.

"Mr. Marley's been killed,' I heard myself saying. "Will you send someone up at once?"

And then for the first time I noticed the poker lying beside the chair, and saw the back of the old man's head. It wasn't a pretty sight, and one of the other men staying in the house—a youngster—turned very white, and went to the window.

"Pretty obvious how it was done," said the stranger, quietly. "Well, gentlemen, nothing ought to be touched in this room until the police arrive. I suggest that we should draw the curtains and go somewhere else to wait for them."

I don't think any of us were sorry to fall in with his suggestion. I also don't think I've ever drunk such a large whisky-and-soda as I did a few minutes later. Discovering the body had been bad enough: breaking the news to the two girls was going to be worse.

It was Joan who met me in the hall—and we stared at one another in silence. Then I nodded my head stupidly.

"It's father," she whispered. "Oh, my God!"

I put out my hand to steady her, and she was looking at me with a fixed stare.

"Don't you understand?" she muttered, hoarsely, and swallowing all the time. "Don't you understand? Jack has been here to-night."

"Jack!" I looked at her foolishly. "Jack!"

And then her full meaning struck me.

"How did that man find out?" she whispered. "And who is he?"

" I don't know. I'll go and ask him." I was still trying to adjust this new development—and her next words seemed to come from a great distance.

" Do something. For God's sake—do something."

Then she turned and left me, and I watched her go up the stairs, walking stiffly and clinging to the banisters.

So Jack had been there! And old Marley was dead! Murdered! Hit on the head with a poker. And Jack had been there. It's only in romantic fiction that the reader is expected to assume the impossibility of the hero committing a crime, owing to the extreme beauty of his nature. And this wasn't romantic fiction. It was hard, brutal reality. The two facts stood there, side by side, in all their dazzling simplicity. Jack's nature was not supremely beautiful. He was an ordinary man, with the devil of a temper when it was roused.

Mechanically I started to walk back to the room where I had left the other three men. They were sitting in silence when I entered, and after a while the stranger got up.

" A dreadful thing to happen," he said, gravely.

" May I ask, sir," I began, " how you came to discover it ? "

" Very simply," he answered. " I was strolling along the road, going back to the village inn where I have been stopping for two or three nights, when I saw the window of the room through the trees. The light was shining out, and I could see someone sitting at the desk. More out of idle curiosity than anything else, I paused for a moment or two, and then something began to arouse my suspicions. The man at the desk seemed so motionless. I thought perhaps he had fainted, or was ill, and after a little hesitation I went in at the gate and looked through the window. To my horror I saw he was dead—and I at once came round to the other room from which the light was shining, and where I found you.

" There is a point which may have some bearing on the crime," he continued, after a pause. " On my way up from the inn a man passed me. He was coming from this direction, and seemed to me to be in a very excited condition. It was his obvious agitation that made me notice him at the time, though in the dim light I couldn't see his face very clearly. But he was swinging his stick in the air, and muttering to himself. At the moment I didn't think much about it. But now——" He shrugged his shoulders slightly. " Of course, I may be completely wrong, but I think it is a thing worth mentioning to the police."

" Would you know the man again ? " I asked, trying to speak quite normally.

" Well, he was tall—six feet at least—and broad. And he was clean-shaven." He spoke thoughtfully, weighing his words. " I might know him again—but I wouldn't swear to it. One has to be doubly careful if a man's life is at stake."

I turned away abruptly. Jack was tall and broad and clean-shaven. Strive as I would, the deadly suspicion was beginning to grip me that Jack, in a fit of ungovernable passion, had killed the old man. And at such moments, whatever may be the legal aspect of the matter, one's main idea is how best to help a pal. If Jack had indeed done it, what was the best thing to do ?

I rang the bell, and told the scared-looking maid to bring the whisky and some glasses. Then, with a muttered apology, I left the room. I felt I wanted to talk to Joan about it. I found her dry-eyed and quite composed, though she was evidently holding herself under control with a great effort. And briefly I told her what the stranger had said.

SHE heard me out in silence : then she spoke with a quiet assurance that surprised me.

" If Jack did it," she said, " he doesn't know he's done it. He doesn't know he's killed—father." She faltered a bit over the last word, and I didn't interrupt. " What I mean is this," she went on after a moment. " I know Jack—better than anyone else. I know those rages of his—when he sees red. But they're over in a minute. He's capable of anything for a second or two, but if he'd done it, Hugh, if he'd hit father—and killed him—his remorse would have been dreadful. He wouldn't have run away : I'm certain of that. That's why I say that if Jack did it he doesn't know—he killed him."

I said nothing : there was no good telling her that it wasn't one blow, nor yet two nor three, that had been used. There was no good telling her that it was no accidental thing done unwittingly in the heat of the moment—that it was an absolute impossibility for the man who had done it to be in ignorance of the fact. And yet, though I realized all that, her simple conviction put new hope into me. Illogical, I admit, but I went downstairs feeling more confident.

I found that the local police had arrived—a sergeant and an ordinary constable—and had already begun their investigations. The principal evidence, of course, came from the stranger, and he repeated to them what he had already told me. His name apparently was Lenham—Victor Lenham—and the police knew he had been stopping at the local inn.

" You saw the body through the window,

sir," said the sergeant, "and then went round to the drawing-room ?"

"That is so, sergeant."

"You didn't go into the room ?"

"Not until later—with these gentlemen. You see," he added, "I've seen death too often not to recognize it. And as, in a way, you will understand, it was no concern of mine, I thought it advisable to have some member of the house itself with me before entering the room."

"Quite, sir, quite." The sergeant nodded portentously. "Is there anything else you can tell us ?"

"Well," said Lenham, "there is a point, which I have already mentioned to this gentleman." He glanced at me, and then, turning back to the sergeant, he told him about the man he had passed on the road. And it was when he came to the description that suddenly the constable gave a whistle of excitement. The sergeant frowned at him angrily, but the worthy P.C., whose only experience of crime up-to-date had been assisting inebriated villagers home, had quite lost his head.

"Mr. Fairfax, sergeant," he exploded. "'E was down here to-night. Caught the last train, 'e did. Jenkins at the station told me—sure thing."

"Good heavens, sergeant!" I said, angrily, "what the devil is the man talking about ? He surely doesn't suppose that Mr. Fairfax had anything to do with it ?"

But the mischief was done. The sergeant formally told off his indiscreet subordinate, but it was obvious that it was merely an official rebuke. In a village like that everybody knows everybody else's private affairs, and the strained relations between the dead man and Jack Fairfax were common property. I could see at a glance that the sergeant regarded the matter as solved already.

"Would you recognize this man again, sir ?" he demanded, and Lenham gave him the same guarded reply as he had already given to me. He might—but he wouldn't swear to it. It was impossible to be too careful in such a case, he repeated, and it was practically dark when he had passed the man.

It was all duly noted down, and then we adjourned to the room of the tragedy. The constable—a ruddy-faced young man—turned pale when he saw the body; then he pulled himself together and assisted the sergeant in his formal examination. I didn't blame him—we were all feeling the strain, somewhat naturally. Lenham seemed the least concerned, but it wasn't a personal matter with him as it was with us, especially with me. All the time I was fidgeting round the room, subconsciously watching the stolid sergeant making notes, but with only one thought dominating my brain—how best to help Jack. Not that I had definitely made up my mind that he'd done it, but even at that stage of the proceedings I realized that appearances were against him. And Joan's words were ringing in my head—"For God's sake—do something."

After a while I crossed the room to a small table on which a tantalus of whisky and two glasses were standing. I looked at the tray with unseeing eyes—an Indian silver one, which old Marley had been very proud of. And then mechanically I picked up the glasses. I don't know why I did so; the action was, as I say, mechanical. They had been used—both of them: they had been used for whisky—one could tell that by the smell. And then I put the glasses down again on the tray: the sergeant was approaching with his note-book.

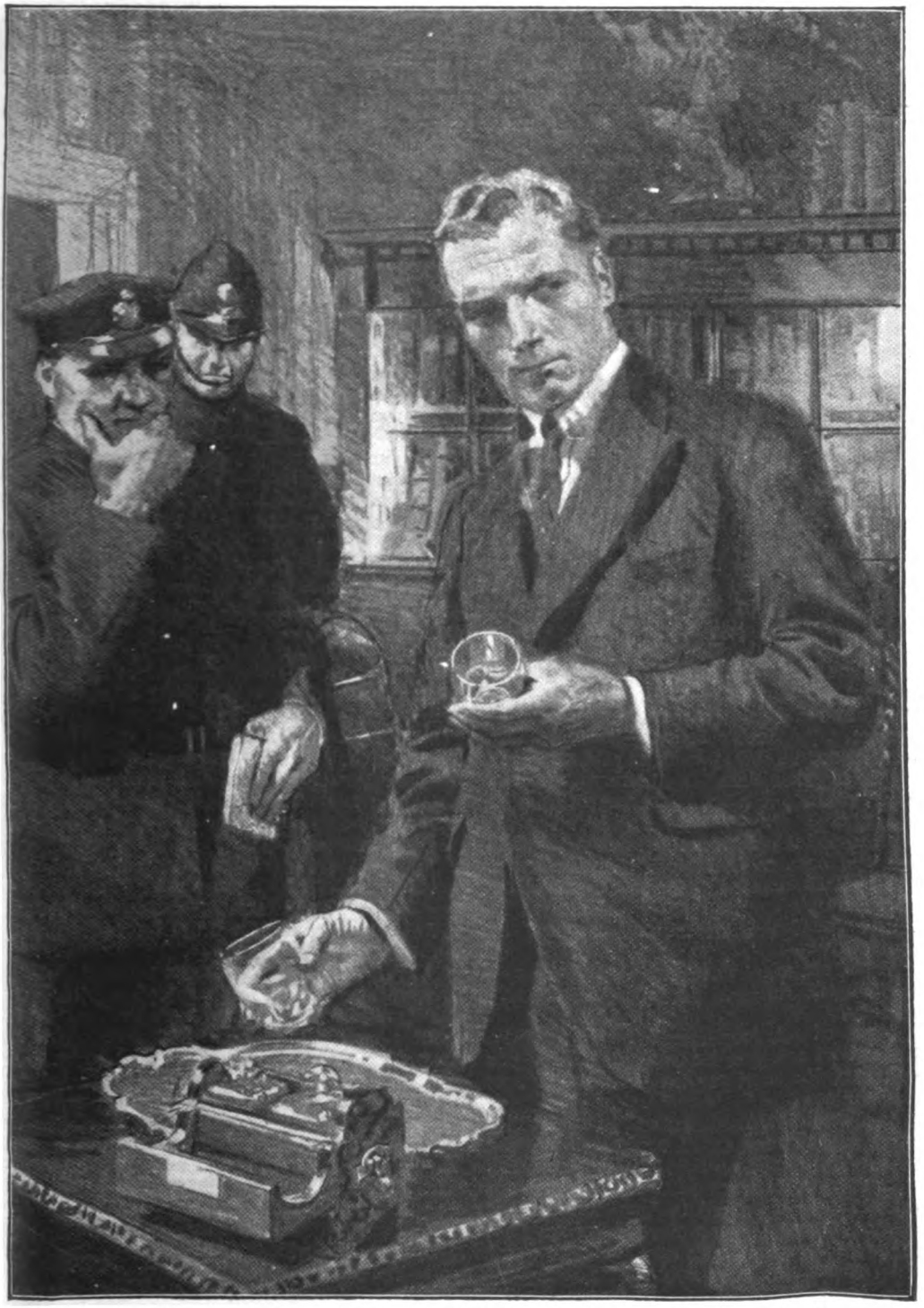
THE sandy-haired man paused, with a reminiscent smile.

"Ever noticed how extraordinarily dense you can be at times, even with a plain fact staring you straight in the face ? There was one staring at me for ten minutes that night before my grey matter began to stir."

"Just hold on a minute," interrupted the Barrister. "Is this plain fact staring us in the face now ?"

No, it isn't, conceded the narrator. At the moment you are in the position of the other people in that room. Mind you, I've left out nothing in order to mystify you; the story, as I have given it to you, is a plain unvarnished account of what took place. But I'm out to disprove your half-brick theory, lawyer man, and to do so with such little story-telling ability as I happen to possess.

Now, I won't weary you with what happened during the next week, beyond saying that an inquest and a burglary took place. And the latter, at any rate, was very successful. The former moved along obvious lines, and resulted in Jack Fairfax being arrested for the wilful murder of his guardian, Roger Marley. The evidence was purely circumstantial, but it was about as damning as it could be. Jack admitted to having had an interview with Marley that night; he admitted that they had had an appalling quarrel. What was even worse was that he admitted to having struck the old man in a furious fit of rage, but beyond that he denied everything. He absolutely swore that the blow he struck Marley could not have killed him; further, that he had never handled the poker. And then a finger-print expert proved that he had. That was the worst shock of the lot, and his explanation given afterwards that, now he came to think of it,



"I looked at the tray with unseeing eyes—and then mechanically I picked up the glasses."

he had picked up the poker to ram the tobacco down in his pipe convinced no one. He indignantly denied that his action in going up to London by the last train was in any sense running away; he had intended all along to go up by that train. And his reason for leaving the house after the interview without attempting to see his *fiancée* was that he was in such a rage with her father that he couldn't trust himself to speak to her for fear of what he might say.

So much for Jack Fairfax's case—pretty black, as you will agree. In fact, I don't think I should be exaggerating if I said that there were only two people in England convinced of his innocence. And he was one of them. Even Joan's faith was shaken a little.

IT was on the tenth day after the inquest that I rang up the inspector who had come over from Exeter to look into the case, with a request that he would come up to the house. I told him that I had certain information which might interest him and suggested that he might care to hear it. I also rang up Lenham at the inn, and asked him if he would mind coming along at the same time. I told him I'd discovered the burglar. By the way, I didn't tell you that it was his room that had been burgled.

In about half an hour they arrived, and the local sergeant as well.

"What's this about my burglar?" laughed Lenham. "A funny fellow—because as far as I can see he didn't take anything."

"All in good time," I answered, smiling. "I've found out a lot of strange things in town."

Lenham looked at me quickly. "Oh! have you been to London?" he inquired.

"Yes," I answered, "for two days. Most entertaining."

And then the inspector chipped in, impatiently:—

"Well, sir, what is it you want to say to me?" He looked at his watch suggestively.

"First of all, inspector," I said, quietly, "I want to ask you a question. Have you ever heard the legal maxim—'*Falsus in uno, falsus in omne*'?"

I could see that he hadn't the faintest idea what I was driving at. I could also see that Lenham's eyes had suddenly become strained.

"It means," I went on, "that if a witness—let us say—is proved to have told one lie, there is strong presumptive evidence that he has told several. At any rate, the value of his statement is greatly diminished. Do you agree?"

"Certainly," he answered. "But I don't see——"

"You will shortly, inspector," I remarked. "Now who would you consider the principal witness against Mr. Fairfax?"

"Mr. Fairfax himself," said the inspector, promptly.

"And leaving him out?" I asked.

"Well—I suppose—this gentleman here." He nodded towards Lenham, who was sitting quite motionless, watching me.

"Precisely," I murmured. "Then why was it necessary for Mr. Lenham to state that his name was Lenham, and further to swear that he had never seen Mr. Marley before—when both those statements were lies?"

"What the devil do you mean?" snarled Lenham, rising from his chair. "What do you mean by saying my name is not Lenham?"

"You wanted to know about the burglar who took nothing, didn't you?" I said, grimly. "Well—I was the burglar, and I took something very valuable—an address."

"What on earth——" began the inspector, and then he glanced at Lenham. "I think you'd better sit still, Mr. Lenham," he said, quietly, "until we have heard what this gentleman has to say."

Lenham sat back in his chair with a venomous look at me. Then he laughed harshly.

"By all means, inspector," he remarked. 'Only it is a little disconcerting to be cross-examined suddenly by a man who admits he is a thief."

As a matter of fact the man didn't know how much I knew—or how little; and between ourselves it was deuced little. But, watching him closely, I knew I was right, and my only hope was to bluff him into some admission.

"Shall we endeavour to reconstruct the events of the night when Mr. Marley was murdered, Mr. Lenardi?" I began, quietly. "That is your name, is it not?—and you are a Corsican."

"Well," he said, "what if I am? I had a very good reason for changing my name."

"Doubtless," I agreed. "Let us hope your reason will prove satisfactory to the inspector. May I suggest, however, unless you can supply a better one, that your reason was to avoid the notoriety which would inevitably arise if a foreigner came to stay in a small village like this? And you were particularly anxious to avoid any possibility of Mr. Marley knowing that a Corsican was in the neighbourhood."

He laughed sarcastically. "I think that I have already stated that I have never even seen Mr. Marley," he sneered.

"Oh!" I remarked. "Then might I ask you, inspector, to have a look at this photograph? It is old and faded, but the faces are still clear."

I handed the photograph to the inspector, nd with a sudden curse the Corsican hipped out a knife and sprang at me. He ealized even then that the game was up, nd his one thought was to revenge himself n me. But I'd been expecting some such nove, and I'd got a revolver handy. Incilentally, revolver shooting is one of the few hings I can do, and I plugged him through he forearm before he could do any damage.

He stood there glaring at me sullenly, and hen the inspector took a hand.

" Stand by that window, sergeant. Now, lr. whatever-your-name-is, no monkey ricks. Do you still deny that you knew Mr. larley ? "

' I refuse to answer," snarled the man.

" Because this photograph is of you and larley and a woman. Taken abroad somewhere.'

" Naples, to be exact, inspector," I said. ' I found it in his rooms in Berners Street, he address of which I got as the result of ny burglary here."

The Corsican stood there like a beast at bay, and the inspector's face was stern.

" What explanation have you got to give ? " he rapped out. " Why did you lie n evidence ? "

' I refuse to answer," repeated the man.

" Since he is so uncommunicative," I remarked, " perhaps you will allow me to reconstruct the crime. Much of it, of necessity, is guess-work. For instance, Lenardi, what was your motive in murdering Mr. Marley ? " I rapped the question out at him, and though he'd have killed me willingly if he could have got at me he didn't deny it.

" Well, ' I continued, " it doesn't matter. Let us assume it was the girl in that photograph. You tracked Marley to earth here—in this village—that is all that concerns us. And having tracked him, you bided your time. Vengeance is the sweeter for delay. Each evening you walked up here, watching him through the window—gloating over what was to come. And then one night you found another man with him—Jack Fairfax —and they were quarrelling. At once you saw that this was your opportunity. However skilfully you hid your traces under ordinary circumstances, there was always a grave risk ; but here, ready to hand, was a marvellous stroke of luck. Perhaps you crept nearer the window in the darkness, secure in the fact that the room was in a remote part of the house. You saw Jack Fairfax leave, blind with rage, and then, skulking out of the night, you entered the room yourself."

" It's a lie ! " shouted the Corsican, but his lips were white.

" And then old Marley saw you, and the rage on his face was replaced by a dreadful terror. He knew what you had come for. I don't think you wasted much time, Lenardi. You picked up the poker with a gloved hand —oh ! you were taking no chances—and you battered his head in. And then, Lenardi—and then you drank a whisky-and-soda. You drank a whisky-and-soda, and then you decided on a very bold move : you came and alarmed the rest of the house. It was clever of you but——"

The sandy-haired man smiled thoughtfully.

We sprang forward together—the inspector and I ; but we were too late. The Corsican had swallowed poison before we could stop him. He was dead in half a minute and he never spoke again. So I can only assume that my imagination was not far off the rails.

' YES, but hang it, man," said the Barrister, peevishly, " the whole thing was a pure fluke on your part."

" I've never laid any claim to being a detective," murmured the sandy-haired man, mildly, rising and helping himself to some more whisky. " All that I said was that there are times when you can build an entire case from your half-brick or its equivalent. And when you find two glasses both smelling strongly of whisky in a room, you assume that two people have drunk whisky. Which was where the Corsican tripped up. You see, he distinctly swore he hadn't entered the room till he came in with us."

The Barrister raised protesting hands to the ceiling.

" The man is indubitably mad," he remarked to no one in particular. " Was not Fairfax in the room most of the evening ? "

The sandy-haired man looked even more mild.

' I think that perhaps I ought to have mentioned one fact sooner, but I was afraid it would spoil the story. The cat has an aversion to water ; the fish have an aversion to dry land. But both these aversions pale into total insignificance when compared to Jack Fairfax's aversion to whisky."

He gazed thoughtfully at his glass.

" A strange flaw in an otherwise fine character. Thank heavens, the symptom is not common ! "

THE HOSTS OF THE PRINCE

by ST NIHAL SINGH

FEW persons have any idea of how very keen the Prince of Wales has been to go to India. Some time ago, when I had the honour of being one of the party which accompanied his Royal Highness to Brighton, where he opened the memorial to Indian soldiers who had been cremated there, he told me that he was sorely disappointed at having to abandon the trip fixed for last year. He added that he looked forward with the greatest anticipation to going this year, and hoped that nothing would come in the way.

The Prince spoke simply, directly. He made no effort to hide the almost boyish joy with which he contemplated the tour.

Without putting on any "side," his Royal Highness also managed to give me the idea that he was anxious, not so much to see the sights which ordinarily attract tourists from all parts of the world, as he was to get a glimpse into the life and psychology of the people over whom he, one day, will reign. His unaffected manner made a deep impression upon my mind.

This conversation took place early in March. Before the summer was over the announcement was made that the Prince would go to India during the autumn. And now he is actually in that country.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH-GAEKWAR.
The first Maharajah to be visited by the Prince.
Photo by courtesy of His Highness.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH-GAEKWAR.

THE itinerary is so planned that the Prince, almost immediately upon his arrival in India, will come into intimate contact with the doyen among the enlightened maharajahs. His Highness the Maharajah-Gaekwar, who will be his Royal Highness's first Indian host, is truly a remarkable personality, both as a Sovereign ruler and as a man.

In his Highness the Prince will find a host worthy of India's regal traditions of hospitality. I can write of the Maharajah-Gaekwar's generous hospitality from personal experience, for I have been entertained at Baroda. His Highness is a rigid economist and a strict disciplinarian. The instinct of hospitality has, however, taken so deep a root in the Indian soil, having been assiduously nurtured since times immemorial, that it flourishes in Baroda and finds expression in lavish feasts and gay *fêtes*, in surroundings which, even on the most ordinary occasions, are sumptuous.

The Maharajah Sahib's own tastes in food and dress are so simple, and his needs so few, that one day I asked him why he maintained so many palaces and kept such large establishments of pages and maids, at a cost running into hundreds of thousands of pounds every year. The ruler of a State, he quietly replied, inherits certain traditions which cannot be ruthlessly discarded. The various establishments, moreover, give hereditary employment to a considerable number of men and women—among them musicians, dancers, and artists—who cannot be mercilessly thrown out of work. He had greatly cut down the establishments kept by his forefathers and predecessors, but only after arranging suitable alternative employment for those ousted out of their hereditary callings.

This spirit of thinking for others is a marked characteristic of the Maharajah-Gaekwar. Let me illustrate my meaning by giving a specific instance which occurred not long ago.

In going through one of the long corridors of his beautiful Laxmivilas Palace, his Highness came upon rather an important member of his household establishment sitting in a corner eating parched gram (a kind of pea). Now, it happens that in India parched gram is eaten by the poorest of the poor.

The scene at once conveyed that suggestion to his Highness, whose powers of observation are very keen and whose brain works with lightning rapidity. He immediately asked the man why he was eating gram. His *employé* straightforwardly replied that the price of living had been going up steadily since the war began, and gram was all that he could afford. His Highness immediately called one of his A.D.C.'s and dictated an order raising salaries all round.

His Highness has a large heart, the softest corner of which is reserved for the lowliest of the lowly. No administrator has taken greater pains than he has done to make knowledge, of a practical, useful nature, available to the poorest peasant in the remotest village.

The disabilities imposed upon the low castes by Brahminism have so revolted his Highness that he has spent the best part of his life in removing them, especially by giving them education which would render them economically independent and automatically raise their social status. He defied the Brahmans by shaking hands with persons called "untouchables," and treated as such. He nominated an "untouchable" to his Legislative Council. The representatives of higher classes could not refuse to sit with the low-caste nominee of the Maharajah on the ground of untouchableness, for thereby they would have shown that all their talk of democracy was hollow. It is in such ways as this that his Highness has been able to make numerous social reforms.

The Maharajah-Gaekwar's intimate knowledge of his State and people has been gained by means of elaborate and frequent tours in all parts of Baroda. His general custom is to make his headquarters at an important town in a district, and while staying there ride out every day in a fresh direction. After a breakfast of toast and a banana, with a cup of coffee, taken before the sun is up, he mounts his horse and rides, all by himself, or with an aide-de-camp following at some distance, twenty or thirty miles into the country. As he rides along he holds converse with anyone and everyone whom he meets, asking them if they have any complaint to make against the officials, or any grievances to be redressed. Needless to add, that personal link with the Maharajah is deeply cherished by his subjects.

Funny incidents occur at times when his Highness is on tour. On one occasion, many years ago, for instance, he walked into a tent and found that it was devoted entirely to his footwear, with a special attendant in charge. Among the shoes, he noticed, were several pairs which he had worn when a lad just in his teens. He asked the attendant why shoes which he could not possibly get on to his feet had been brought. The man replied that the orders given were that everything was to be taken which his Highness, while on tour, might possibly call for, and therefore all the shoes and boots were brought. The Maharajah immediately took steps to prevent in future such an unintelligent execution of his orders.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH-HOLKAR.

THE next Maratha Maharajah his Royal Highness will visit is his Highness the Maharajah-Holkar of Indore. Still in the early thirties, he has been but a few years in power. Thin, rather tall, with clear-cut features, he is a man of acute perceptions, and I predict that the world will hear much of him.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH-HOLKAR OF INDORE.
One of India's younger rulers
Photo by courtesy of His Highness.

While desirous of maintaining the stately traditions inherited by him from the warrior-ancestors who carved Indore out of the Mughal Empire, he is receptive to new ideas. Some time ago, for instance, he invited a Scottish professor, learned in sciences and a specialist in town-planning, to his capital to advise him in regard to beautifying and improving Indore.

Under the patronage of the Maharajah-Holkar, a quaint procession was got up by the Professor in order to drive home to the common people the elementary principles of municipal and personal hygiene. Through streets which had been thoroughly swept and cleaned marched the scavengers of the town, clad in new attractive clothing, preceded by a brass band. They bore a huge model of a rat (the carrier of the plague infection), and also of a mosquito (responsible for so much malaria). Townsmen and children joined as the procession proceeded, until it stretched for half a mile or more. The march ended at the burning ghat, where the images of these carriers of disease were cremated with due solemnity.

It is difficult to exaggerate the value of the show, carried out on a spectacular scale, as a visual lesson in the science of health and hygiene. The people of Indore are not likely to forget it.

I relate that incident merely to show that his Highness the Maharajah-Holkar possesses that quickness of perception which enables him to employ men who can enter into the psychology of his subjects and devise means to interest them in their own welfare. Only by such means is it possible to give an impetus to progress in the Indian States, which will enable them to make up their deficiencies and come into line with the up-to-date countries of the world.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH-SCINDIA.

THE only other Maratha Maharajah the Prince will visit is his Highness the Maharajah-Scindia of Gwalior. So attached is he to the British Ruling Family that he has named his son and heir after the King-Emperor, and his daughter—his only other child—after the Queen-Empress, who are godfather and godmother to them.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH-SCINDIA OF GWALIOR.
One of the most versatile of men. His own Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief.
Photo. R. L. Desai.

I wonder if the Prince will be able to persuade the Maharajah-Scindia to show his wonderful mechanical genius, by riding in the engine-driver's car and running the train bringing his Royal guest to his capital?

In any case, the Maharajah-Scindia is sure to command his army on the parade ground. A better-disciplined army is not to be found anywhere in India. The troops owe their fighting efficiency to the Maharajah, who is his own Commander-in-Chief as well as Prime Minister.

His Highness is a Trojan for work. No matter what time he may retire at night, he rises with the lark, and is at his desk before ten o'clock. He has his office in the top storey of his palace, a lofty building. From that point of vantage he can see the heads of the various departments drive in their motors and carriages to the secretariat offices near by. Woe betide anyone who may be late in reaching his office, especially on two successive mornings, or twice near together. No official, no matter how high, dares to leave his office early, because his Highness works until late in the evening, particularly during the period when the Budget is in active preparation, for anyone is liable to be sent for to explain matters.

The Maharajah's motto is: "Work hard and play hard." The day's business over, he goes to the club, which is his pet institution, if any institution may be so designated. There he forgets that he is the ruler of all he surveys. So sincere is he in that intention, that he makes his noblemen and officials associate with him there on equal terms. In the cool of the evening he plays a set or two of tennis, or goes out for a walk or drive. After dinner he plays a rubber or two of bridge, of which he is very fond.

So strict a disciplinarian, however, is the Maharajah-Scindia that the men with whom he has made free of an evening cannot expect the slightest mercy from him should they appear late the next morning at the parade ground or at their office, and try to explain away the delay on the plea of having had to keep late hours and indulge in conviviality. They very well know that his Highness would tell them that he went to bed no earlier than they did, and yet was not late in attending to his duties. Conviviality, in his philosophy, must stop short of lowering efficiency. Whatever else he may overlook, he certainly will not put up with inefficiency. No wonder that Gwalior has made great progress during his *régime*.

THE VETERAN "SIR PARTAB."

THE veteran Maharajah Sir Partab Singh, who in his capacity of the Maharajah-Regent of Jodhpur will receive the Prince, is distinguished for his great quality of fearlessness. On many and many an occasion on the hunting-field his life has been in jeopardy, yet he never, even momentarily, lost his presence of mind.

THE VETERAN "SIR PARTAB."
H.H. the Maharajah-Regent of Jodhpur will receive H.R.H. the Prince.
Photo. Downey, by courtesy of His Highness.

So keen a fighter is his Highness that when the Tirah campaign broke out he immediately asked the Government of India to let him accompany the expeditionary force. There was a disposition to hold him up, so he jumped into the next railway train and

appeared with all possible speed at the Government House.

The Marquess of Curzon, then Viceroy, listened earnestly to his plea, but tried to dissuade him from putting his resolve into execution, because of the hardships that he was bound to suffer in rough campaign life. "Sir Partab," however, refused to be persuaded. In giving me an account of his interview with the Viceroy, his Highness told me, some years ago, that he actually threatened him with having recourse to the ancient Hindu institution of "sitting *dharna*"—that is to say, of sitting on Lord Curzon's doorstep and refusing to eat or drink unless he was granted his wish. Such earnestness naturally won the day.

The last time that I saw his Highness, when the war was nearing its end, he told me that he was loath to leave the Western theatre of war. The desire of his heart was to stay on in France until the enemy was defeated and he could ride on his charger in the grand parade held in celebration of victory.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF KASHMIR.

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJAH OF KASHMIR AND JAMMU, whom the Prince will visit in Jammu, since he cannot find the time to visit Kashmir, is one of the most interesting figures among Rajput rulers. Though seventy-two years of age, he still takes considerable interest in the administration of his State, which, in point of area, is the largest, and which politicaliy is exceedingly important because it touches four foreign countries—namely, Afghanistan, the Russian Pamirs, Chinese Turkestan, and Tibet.

The length to which the tradition of hospitality is carried in India of the Rajas is illustrated by the following incident, which occurred some years ago. A very high official paid a visit to his Highness's camp, which was specially furnished with ivory furniture upon which Kashmir artists had lavished their skill. Throughout the interview the visitor's eyes were devouring the furniture, and he more than once complimented the Maharajah upon possessing as his subjects men who could execute such works of art. Immediately the visit ended his Highness ordered that the furniture be packed and sent with his compliments to the official whose fancy it had taken. He naturally demurred at being given such a costly present, but the Maharajah would not listen to his polite protests, and the ivory furniture to-day lends distinction to a well-known mansion in London's West-end.

Cricket has been the Maharajah's one great hobby—cricket as he plays it. Making runs does not conform to his ideas of what a Maharajah should and should not do. While playing, he, therefore, has a retainer stand by him, who runs whenever the Maharajah makes a hit. A friend of mine who recently returned from Kashmir told me that he saw the Maharajah play in a cricket match shortly before he left.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF MYSORE.

MYSORE is the most southernly Rajput State to be visited by the Prince of Wales. An illuminating incident, showing the spirit of hospitality of the Maharajah of Mysore, was recently related to me by a friend who is very close to his Highness. A Viceroy visited the State, and a hunt was organized in his honour. As host his Highness accompanied the party, to provision which elaborate arrangements were, of course, made. His Highness is, however, a pious Hindu, and he chose to go the live-long day without eating a morsel of food.

H.H. THE MAHARAJAH OF MYSORE,

who rules his large estate on constitutional lines and is fond of sport.

Photo, by courtesy of His Highness.

Though keenly interested in the welfare of his subjects, his Highness is so constitutionally inclined that he does not interfere with the administrative machinery unless a grave emergency arises. He has gathered round himself a set of capable administrators who, under his guidance, are developing water-power and industries, improving agriculture, diffusing knowledge, and modernizing Mysore in every respect.

THE MUSLIM RULERS.

HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD, who, since the days of the old "John" Company, has been styled the faithful ally of the British, is taking steps which will soon make him a constitutional monarch. He has promised to grant a Constitution to his people, and at present schemes for the constitution of representative institutions are being elaborated under his direct supervision.

The Nizam is the richest among the Indian Sovereign rulers. His State yields an annual revenue of about four million pounds. Exceedingly simple in his personal life, his Exalted Highness inherits the traditions of hospitality of the Moghul Court. The Prince of Wales can, therefore, be sure of the most lavish hospitality while he is the Nizam's guest.

Her Highness the Nawab Begum of Bhopal will be the only other Muslim ruler who will entertain his Royal Highness. She is so devotedly attached to the Royal Family that when she was having an audience with the King during his Durbar visit to India she, in a burst of emotion, drew aside her veil—the greatest compliment that an orthodox Muslim lady would pay to any man.

Believing, as she does, that *purdah* is prescribed by the Prophet, her Highness has adhered to the veil, whether travelling in Europe or Asia or remaining in her own State. But though she sees her Ministers and subjects and State through the lattice-work in front of her eyes in the *burqa*, or cloak, which envelops her form when she appears in public, yet she is an exceedingly capable ruler.

THE SIKH MAHARAJAHS.

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJAH OF PATIALA, the first Sikh Maharajah to be visited by the Prince, has paid so many visits to England that his tall, majestic figure is familiar to many persons in this country, especially to patrons of sport. He seldom misses a cricket match at Lord's, and always is the centre of an admiring crowd. He is especially a hero to the schoolboys, who, on occasion, lose their awe of his exalted station, and, flourishing match-cards and fountain-pens, clamour for his autograph.

His Highness seldom refuses such requests. On one such occasion he was literally besieged by an army of boys, and wrote his signature so many times that it made his hand ache, accompanying his autograph with trite sentences suitable to the time, such as "Hit the Hun hard."

In those days he wore a general's uniform, with two rows of ribbons across his breast. His upright, stalwart, martial figure, his handsome features, his beard rolled up in a tight twist and fastened behind his ears, and his carefully-tied turban, appealed to the imagination of the man in the street and made him a popular figure.

About that time (1918) Cardiff conferred its freedom upon him, and he was so much impressed by the hospitality of the Welsh city, that he had his Court artist put the impressive scene upon canvas.

The only other Sikh Maharajah who, according to the original programme, is to be visited by the Prince, is his Highness the Maharajah of Kapurthala, who is one of the most artistic of men. He is a connoisseur in painting, sculpture, music, and dancing. He romantically fell in love with a famous Spanish danseuse, and made her his Maharanee. His wide culture and artistic tastes are specially appreciated in Paris, which he visits frequently.

H.H. THE MAHARANA OF UDAIPUR.

WHEN the Prince of Wales goes to Udaipur, in Rajputana, and is welcomed by his host, his Highness the Maharana of that State, he will meet all that is best in Rajput knight-errantry. His Highness belongs to a dynasty believed to be descended directly from the sun. It is, perhaps, the oldest dynasty in power in any part of the world. By a strange coincidence, the other ancient ruling dynasty — that of Japan—traces its descent from the goddess of light.

H.H. THE MAHARANA OF UDAIPUR,

who represents a line which has been ruling longer than any other dynasty.

From the only photograph in this country, by courtesy of Thakur J. Seesodia.

The Maharana of Udaipur is now an old man, and leaves the administration of his State largely to his son and heir. Until quite recently, however, he ruled, and did not merely reign. He ruled, moreover, in the traditional Hindu style, never taking to the new-fangled notions of bureaucracy.

His Highness is a man of indomitable will. To him the word "fear" has no meaning, and is famed all over India for his independence of character. Some time before he came to the throne, a man was detected in the act of stealing from his State cattle, which he greatly valued. Arming himself with a stout bamboo stick, he immediately gave chase to the thief. The night was dark. Stumbling against an obstacle, he fell headlong and cracked his skull. Even so severe an injury, however, did not stop him from continuing the chase. He got up, and, with his head bleeding profusely, ran on until he caught up with the thief, beat him, and rescued his cattle. By that time his retainers arrived, and bandaged his head, which later had to be trephined.

Jeeves in the Spring-Time

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS

"JEEVES," I said, coming away from the window.

"Sir?" said Jeeves. He had been clearing the breakfast - things, but at the sound of the young master's voice he cheesed it courteously.

"It's a topping morning, Jeeves."

"Decidedly, sir."

"Spring and all that."

"Yes, sir."

"In the spring, Jeeves, a livelier iris gleams upon the burnished dove."

"So I have been informed, sir."

"Right-o! Then bring me my whangee, my yellowest shoes, and the old green Homburg. I'm going into the park to do pastoral dances."

"Very good, sir."

I DON'T know if you know that sort of feeling you get on these days round about the end of April and the beginning of May, when the sky's a light blue with cotton-wool clouds and there's a bit of a breeze blowing from the west? Kind of uplifted feeling. Romantic, if you know what I mean. I'm not much of a ladies' man, but on this particular morning it seemed to me that what I really wanted was some charming girl to buzz up and ask me to save her from assassins or something. So that it was a bit of an anti-climax when I merely ran into young Bingo Little, looking perfectly foul in a crimson satin tie decorated with horseshoes.

"Hallo, Bertie!" said Bingo.

"My God, man!" I gargled, "The cravat! The gent's neckwear! Why? For what reason?"

"Oh, the tie?" He blushed. "I—er—I was given it."

He seemed embarrassed, so I dropped the subject. Always the gentleman. We toddled along a bit, and sat down on a couple of chairs by the Serpentine. Conversation languished. Bingo was staring straight ahead of him in a glassy sort of manner.

"I say, Bertie," he said, after a pause of about an hour and a quarter.

"Hallo!"

"Do you like the name Mabel?"

"No."

"No?"

"No."

"You don't think there's a kind of music in the word, like the wind rustling gently through the tree-tops?"

"No."

He seemed disappointed for a moment; then cheered up.

"Of course, you wouldn't. You always were a fat-headed worm without any soul, weren't you?"

"Just as you say. Who is she? Tell me all."

For I realized now that poor old Bingo was going through it once again. Ever since I have known him—and we were at school together—he has been perpetually falling in love with someone, generally in the spring, which seems to act on him like magic. At school he had the finest collection of actresses' photographs of anyone of his time; and at Oxford his romantic nature was a byword.

"You'd better come along and meet her at lunch," he said, looking at his watch.

"A ripe suggestion," I said. 'Where are you meeting her? At the Ritz?"

"Near the Ritz."

He was geographically accurate. About fifty yards east of the Ritz there is one of those blighted tea-and-bun shops you see dotted about all over London, and into this, if you'll believe me, young Bingo dived like a homing rabbit; and before I had time to say a word we were wedged in at a table, on the brink of a silent pool of coffee left there by an early luncher.

I'm bound to say I couldn't quite follow the development of the scenario. Bingo, while not absolutely rolling in the stuff, has always had a fairish amount of the ready.

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Apart from what he got from his uncle—old Mortimer Little; you've probably heard of Little's Liniment (It Limbers Up The Legs): he ran that till he turned it into a company and retired with a pile—I say, apart from what he got from the above, who gave him a pretty decent allowance, Bingo being his only relative and presumably his heir, I knew, that Bingo had finished up the jumping season well on the right side of the ledger, having collected a parcel over the Lincolnshire. Why, then, was he lunching the girl at this God-forsaken eatery? It couldn't be because he was hard up.

Just then the waitress arrived. Rather a pretty girl.

"Aren't we going to wait——?" I started to say to Bingo, thinking it somewhat thick that, in addition to asking a girl to lunch with him in a place like this, he should fling himself on the foodstuffs before she turned up, when I caught sight of his face, and stopped.

The man was goggling. His entire map was suffused with a rich blush. He looked like the Soul's Awakening done in pink.

"Hallo, Mabel!" he said, with a sort of gulp.

"Hallo!" said the girl.

"Mabel," said Bingo, "this is Bertie Wooster, a pal of mine."

"Pleased to meet you," she said. "Nice morning."

"Fine," I said.

"You see I'm wearing the tie," said Bingo.

"It suits you beautiful," said the girl.

Personally, if anyone had told me that a tie like that suited me, I should have risen and struck them on the mazzard, regardless of their age and sex; but poor old Bingo simply got all flustered with gratification, and smirked in the most gruesome manner.

"Well, what's it going to be to-day?" asked the girl, introducing the business touch into the conversation.

Bingo studied the menu devoutly.

"I'll have a cup of cocoa, cold veal and ham pie, slice of fruit cake, and a macaroon. Same for you, Bertie?"

I gazed at the man, revolted. That he could have been a pal of mine all these years and think me capable of insulting the old tum with this sort of stuff cut me to the quick.

"Or how about a bit of hot steak-pudding, with a sparkling limado to wash it down?" said Bingo.

You know, the way love can change a fellow is really frightful to contemplate. This chappie before me, who spoke in this absolutely careless way of macaroons and limado, was the man I had seen in happier days telling the head-waiter at Claridge's exactly how he wanted the *chef* to prepare the *sole frit au gourmet aux champignons*, and saying he would jolly well sling it back if it wasn't just right. Ghastly! Ghastly!

A roll and butter and a small coffee seemed the only things on the list that hadn't been specially prepared by the nastier-minded

"'It's a topping morning, Jeeves.' 'Decidedly, sir.' 'Spring and all that.' 'Yes, sir.'"

members of the Borgia family for people they had a particular grudge against, so I chose them, and Mabel hopped it.

"Well?" said Bingo, rapturously.

I took it that he wanted my opinion of the female poisoner who had just left us.

"Very nice," I said.

He seemed dissatisfied.

"You don't think she's the most wonderful girl you ever saw?" he said, wistfully.

"Oh, absolutely!" I said, to appease the blighter. "Where did you meet her?"

"At a subscription dance at Camberwell."

"What on earth were you doing at a subscription dance at Camberwell?"

"Your man Jeeves asked me if I would buy a couple of tickets. It was in aid of some charity or other."

"Jeeves? I didn't know he went in for that sort of thing."

"Well, I suppose he has to relax a bit every now and then. Anyway, he was there, swinging a dashed efficient shoe. I hadn't meant to go at first, but I turned up for a lark. Oh, Bertie, think what I might have missed!"

"What might you have missed?" I asked, the old lemon being slightly clouded.

"Mabel, you chump. If I hadn't gone I shouldn't have met Mabel."

"Oh, ah!"

At this point Bingo fell into a species of trance, and only came out of it to wrap himself round the pie and macaroon.

"Bertie," he said, "I want your advice."

"Carry on."

"At least, not your advice, because that wouldn't be much good to anybody. I mean, you're a pretty consummate old ass, aren't you? Not that I want to hurt your feelings, of course."

"No, no, I see that."

"What I wish you would do is to put the whole thing to that fellow Jeeves of yours, and see what he suggests. You've often told me that he has helped other pals of yours out of messes. From what you tell me, he's by way of being the brains of the family."

"He's never let me down yet."

"Then put my case to him."

"What case?"

"My problem."

"What problem?"

"Why, you poor fish, my uncle, of course. What do you think my uncle's going to say to all this? If I sprang it on him cold, he'd tie himself in knots on the hearth-rug."

"I ran into young Bingo Little, looking perfectly foul in a crimson satin tie decorated with horseshoes."

"One of these emotional johnnies, eh?"

"Somehow or other his mind has got to be prepared to receive the news. But how?"

"Ah!"

"That's a lot of help, that 'ah'! You see, I'm pretty well dependent on the old boy. If he cut off my allowance, I should be very much in the soup. So you put the whole binge to Jeeves and see if he can't scare up a happy ending somehow. Tell him my future is in his hands, and that, if the wedding bells ring out, he can rely on me, even unto half my kingdom. Well, call it ten quid. Jeeves would exert himself with ten quid on the horizon, what?"

"Undoubtedly," I said.

I wasn't in the least surprised at Bingo wanting to lug Jeeves into his private affairs like this. It was the first thing I would have thought of doing myself if I had been in any hole of any description. Most fellows, no doubt, are all for having their valets confine their activities to creasing trousers and what not without trying to run the home; but it's different with Jeeves. Right from the first day he came to me, I

have looked on him as a sort of guide, philosopher, and friend. He is a bird of the ripest intellect, full of bright ideas. If anybody could fix things for poor old Bingo, he could.

I stated the case to him that night after dinner.

"Jeeves."

"Sir?"

"Are you busy just now?"

"No, sir."

"I mean, not doing anything in particular?"

"No, sir. It is my practice at this hour to read some improving book; but, if you desire my services, this can easily be postponed, or, indeed, abandoned altogether."

"Well, I want your advice. It's about Mr. Little."

"Young Mr. Little, sir, or the elder Mr. Little, his uncle, who lives in Pounceby Gardens?"

Jeeves seems to know everything. Most amazing thing. I'd been pally with Bingo practically all my life, and yet I didn't remember ever having heard that his uncle lived anywhere in particular.

"How did you know he lived in Pounceby Gardens?" I said.

"I am on terms of some intimacy with the elder Mr. Little's cook, sir. In fact, there is an understanding."

I'm bound to say that this gave me a bit of a start. Somehow I'd never thought of Jeeves going in for that sort of thing.

"Do you mean you're engaged?"

"It may be said to amount to that, sir."

"Well, well!"

"She is a remarkably excellent cook, sir," said Jeeves, as though he felt called on to give some explanation. "What was it you wished to ask me about Mr. Little?"

I sprang the details on him.

"And that's how the matter stands, Jeeves," I said. "I think we ought to rally round a trifle and help poor old Bingo put the thing through. Tell me about old Mr. Little. What sort of a chap is he?"

"A somewhat curious character, sir. Since retiring from business he has become a great recluse, and now devotes himself almost entirely to the pleasures of the table."

"Greedy hog, you mean?"

"I would not, perhaps, take the liberty of describing him in precisely those terms, sir. He is what is usually called a gourmet. Very particular about what he eats, and for that reason sets a high value on Miss Watson's services."

"The cook?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, it looks to me as though our best plan would be to shoot young Bingo in on him after dinner one night. Melting mood, I mean to say, and all that."

"The difficulty is, sir, that at the moment Mr. Little is on a diet, owing to an attack of gout."

"Things begin to look wobbly."

"No, sir, I fancy that the elder Mr. Little's misfortune may be turned to the younger Mr. Little's advantage. I was speaking only the other day to Mr. Little's valet, and he was telling me that it

"'Mabel,' said Bingo, 'this is Bertie Wooster, a pal of mine.'"

has become his principal duty to read to Mr. Little in the evenings. If I were in your place, sir, I should send young Mr. Little to read to his uncle."

"Nephew's devotion, you mean? Old man touched by kindly action, what?"

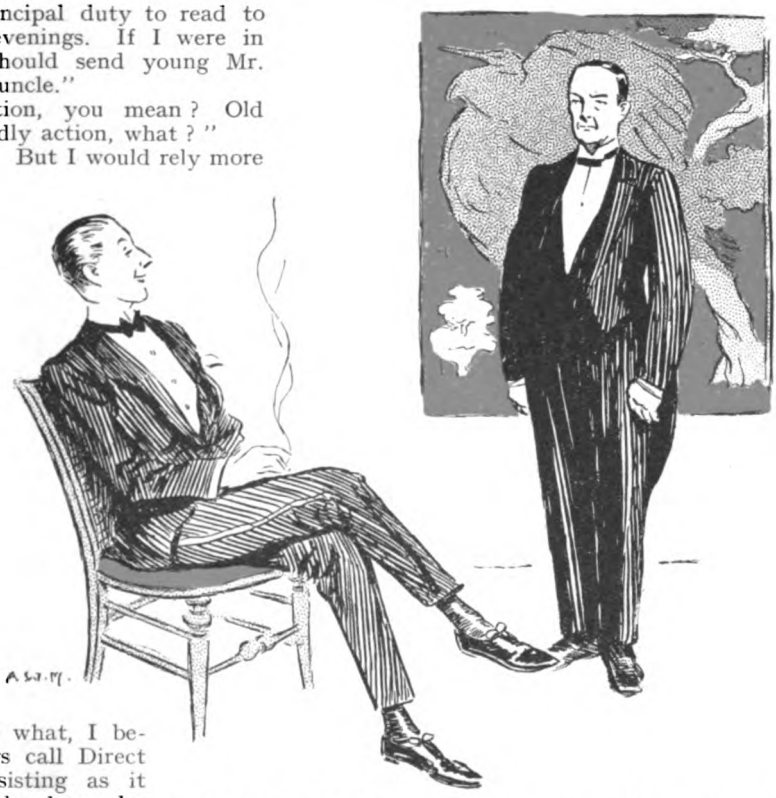
"Partly that, sir. But I would rely more on young Mr. Little's choice of literature."

"That's no good. Jolly old Bingo has a kind face, but when it comes to literature he stops at the *Sporting Times*."

"That difficulty may be overcome. I would be happy to select books for Mr. Little to read. Perhaps I might explain my idea further?"

"I can't say I quite grasp it yet."

"The method which I advocate is what, I believe, the advertisers call Direct Suggestion, sir, consisting as it does of driving an idea home by constant repetition. You may have had experience of the system?"



"Right from the first day he came to me, I have looked on Jeeves as a sort of guide, philosopher, and friend."

"You mean they keep on telling you that some soap or other is the best, and after a bit you come under the influence and charge round the corner and buy a cake?"

"Exactly, sir. The same method was the basis of all the most valuable propaganda during the recent war. I see no reason why it should not be adopted to bring about the desired result with regard to the subject's views on class distinctions. If young Mr. Little were to read day after day to his uncle a series of narratives in which marriage with young persons of an inferior social status was held up as both feasible and admirable, I fancy it would prepare the elder Mr. Little's mind for the reception of the information that his nephew wishes to marry a waitress in a tea-shop."

"*Are* there any books of that sort nowadays? The only ones I ever see mentioned in the papers are about married couples who find life grey, and can't stick each other at any price."

"Yes, sir, there are a great many, neglected by the reviewers but widely read. You have never encountered 'All for Love,' by Rosie M. Banks?"

"No."

"Nor 'A Red, Red Summer Rose,' by the same author?"

"No."

"I have an aunt, sir, who owns an almost complete set of Rosie M. Banks'. I could easily borrow as many volumes as young Mr. Little might require. They make very light, attractive reading."

"Well, it's worth trying."

"I should certainly recommend the scheme, sir."

"All right, then. Toddle round to your aunt's to-morrow and grab a couple of the fruitiest. We can but have a dash at it."

"Precisely, sir."

BINGO reported three days later that Rosie M. Banks was the goods and beyond a question the stuff to give the troops. Old Little had jibbed somewhat at first at the proposed change of literary diet, he not being much of a lad for fiction and having stuck hitherto exclusively to the heavier monthly reviews; but Bingo had got chapter one of "All for Love" past his guard before he knew what was happening, and after

that there was nothing to it. Since then they had finished "A Red, Red Summer Rose," "Madcap Myrtle," and "Only a Factory Girl," and were half-way through "The Courtship of Lord Strathmorlick."

Bingo told me all this in a husky voice over an egg beaten up in sherry. The only blot on the thing from his point of view was that it wasn't doing a bit of good to the old vocal cords, which were beginning to show signs of cracking under the strain. He had been looking his symptoms up in a medical dictionary, and he thought he had got "clergyman's throat." But against this you had to set the fact that he was making an undoubted hit in the right quarter, and also that after the evening's reading he always stayed on to dinner; and, from what he told me, the dinners turned out by old Little's cook had to be tasted to be believed. There were tears in the old blighter's eyes as he got on the subject of the clear soup. I suppose to a fellow who for weeks had been tackling macaroons and limado it must have been like Heaven.

Old Little wasn't able to give any practical assistance at these banquets, but Bingo said that he came to the table and had his whack of arrowroot, and sniffed the dishes, and told stories of *entrées* he had had in the past, and sketched out scenarios of what he was going to do to the bill of fare in the future, when the doctor put him in shape; so I suppose he enjoyed himself, too, in a way. Anyhow, things seemed to be buzzing along quite satisfactorily, and Bingo said he had got an idea which, he thought, was going to clinch the thing. He wouldn't tell me what it was, but he said it was a pippin.

"We make progress, Jeeves," I said.

"That is very satisfactory, sir."

"Mr. Little tells me that when he came to the big scene in 'Only a Factory Girl,' his uncle gulped like a stricken bull-pup."

"Indeed, sir?"

"Where Lord Claude takes the girl in his arms, you know, and says——"

"I am familiar with the passage, sir. It is distinctly moving. It was a great favourite of my aunt's."

"I think we're on the right track."

"It would seem so, sir."

"In fact, this looks like being another of your successes. I've always said, and I always shall say, that for sheer brain, Jeeves, you stand alone. All the other great thinkers of the age are simply in the crowd, watching you go by."

"Thank you very much, sir. I endeavour to give satisfaction."

"'Cheerio!' said young Bingo. 'One-thirty to-morrow. Don't be late.'"

ABOUT a week after this, Bingo blew in with the news that his uncle's gout had ceased to trouble him, and that on the morrow he would be back at the old stand working away with knife and fork as before.

"And, by the way," said Bingo, "he wants you to lunch with him to-morrow."

"Me? Why me? He doesn't know I exist."

"Oh, yes, he does. I've told him about you."

"What have you told him?"

"Oh, various things. Anyhow, he wants to meet you. And take my tip, laddie—you go! I should think lunch to-morrow would be something special."

I don't know why it was, but even then it struck me that there was something dashed odd—almost sinister, if you know

what I mean—about young Bingo's manner. The old egg had the air of one who has something up his sleeve.

"There is more in this than meets the eye," I said. "Why should your uncle ask a fellow to lunch whom he's never seen?"

"My dear old fathead, haven't I just said that I've been telling him all about you—that you're my best pal—at school together, and all that sort of thing?"

"But even then—and another thing. Why are you so dashed keen on my going?"

Bingo hesitated for a moment.

"Well, I told you I'd got an idea. This is it. I want you to spring the news on him. I haven't the nerve myself."

"What! I'm hanged if I do!"

"And you call yourself a pal of mine!"

"Yes, I know; but there are limits."

"Bertie," said Bingo, reproachfully, "I saved your life once."

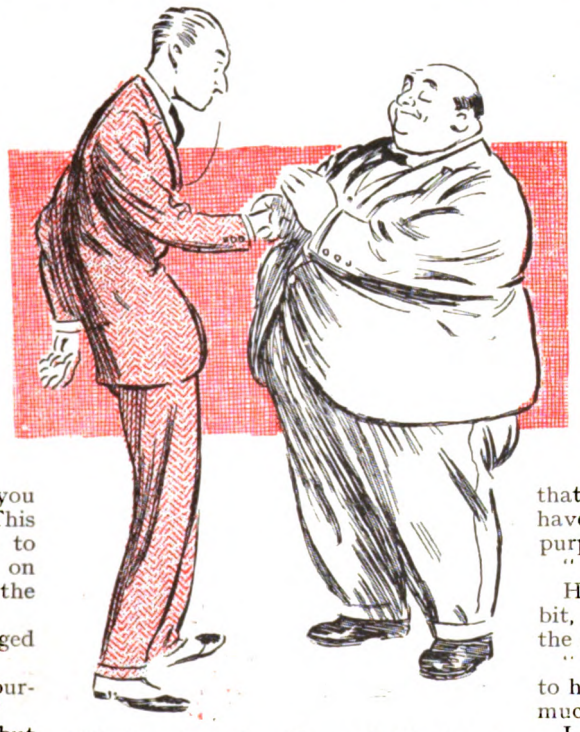
"When?"

"Didn't I? It must have been some other fellow, then. Well, anyway, we were boys together and all that. You can't let me down."

"Oh, all right," I said. "But, when you say you haven't nerve enough for any dashed thing in the world, you misjudge yourself. A fellow who——"

"Cheerio!" said young Bingo. "One-thirty to-morrow. Don't be late."

I'M bound to say that the more I contemplated the binge, the less I liked it. It was all very well for Bingo to say that I was slated for a magnificent lunch; but what good is the best possible lunch to a fellow if he is slung out into the street on his ear during the soup course? However, the word of a Wooster is his bond and all that sort of rot, so at one-thirty next day I tottered up the steps of No. 16, Pounceby Gardens, and punched the bell.



"Half a minute later I was shaking hands with the fattest man I have ever seen in my life."

And half a minute later I was up in the drawing-room, shaking hands with the fattest man I have ever seen in my life.

The motto of the Little family was evidently "variety." Young Bingo is long and thin and hasn't had a superfluous ounce on him since we first met; but the uncle restored the average and a bit over. The hand which grasped mine wrapped it round and enfolded it till I began to wonder if I'd ever get it out without excavating machinery.

"Mr. Wooster, I am gratified—I am proud—I am honoured."

It seemed to me that young Bingo must have boosted me to some purpose.

"Oh, ah!" I said.

He stepped back a bit, still hanging on to the good right hand.

"You are very young to have accomplished so much!"

I couldn't follow the train of thought. The family, especially my Aunt Agatha, who has savaged me incessantly from childhood up, have always rather made a point of the fact that mine is a wasted life, and that, since I won the prize at my first school for the best collection of wild flowers made during the summer holidays, I haven't done a dam' thing to land me on the nation's scroll of fame. I was wondering if he couldn't have got me mixed up with someone else, when the telephone-bell rang outside in the hall, and the maid came in to say that I was wanted. I buzzed down, and found it was young Bingo.

"Hallo!" said young Bingo. "So you've got there? Good man! I knew I could rely on you. I say, old crumpet, did my uncle seem pleased to see you?"

"Absolutely all over me. I can't make it out."

"Oh, that's all right. I just rang up to explain. The fact is, old man, I know you won't mind, but I told him that you were the author of those books I've been reading to him."

"What!"

"Yes, I said that 'Rosie M. Banks' was your pen-name, and you didn't want it generally known, because you were a modest, retiring sort of chap. He'll listen to you now. Absolutely hang on your words. A brightish idea, what? I doubt if Jeeves in person could have thought up a better one than that. Well, pitchit strong, old lad, and keepsteadily before you the fact that I must have my allowance raised. I can't possibly marry on what I've got now. If this film is to end with the slow fade-out on the embrace, at least double is indicated. Well, that's that. Cheerio!"

And he rang off. At that moment the gong sounded, and the genial host came tumbling downstairs like the delivery of a ton of coals.

I ALWAYS look back to that lunch with a sort of aching regret. It was the lunch of a lifetime, and I wasn't in a fit state to appreciate it. Subconsciously, if you know what I mean, I could see it was pretty special, but I had got the wind up to such a frightful extent over the ghastly situation in which young Bingo had landed me that its deeper meaning never really penetrated. Most of the time I might have been eating sawdust for all the good it did me.

Old Little struck the literary note right from the start.

"My nephew has probably told you that I have been making a close study of your books of late?" he began.

"Yes. He did mention it. How—er—how did you like the bally things?"

He gazed reverently at me.

"Mr. Wooster, I am not ashamed to say that the tears came into my eyes as I listened to them. It amazes me that a man as young as you can have been able to plumb human nature so surely to its depths; to play with so unerring a hand on the quivering heart-strings of your reader; to write novels so true, so human, so moving, so vital!"

"Oh, it's just a knack," I said.

The good old persp. was bedewing my forehead by this time in a pretty lavish manner. I don't know when I've been so rattled.

"Do you find the room a trifle warm?"

"Oh, no, no, rather not. Just right."

"Then it's the pepper. If my cook has a fault—which I am not prepared to admit—it is that she is inclined to stress the pepper a trifle in her made dishes. By the way, do you like her cooking?"

I was so relieved that we had got off the subject of my literary output that I shouted approval in a ringing baritone.

"I am delighted to hear it, Mr. Wooster. I may be prejudiced, but to my mind that woman is a genius."

"Absolutely!" I said.

"She has been with me seven years, and in all that time I have not known her guilty of a single lapse from the highest standard. Except once, in the winter of 1917, when a purist might have condemned a certain mayonnaise of hers as lacking in creaminess. But one must make allowances. There had been several air-raids about that time, and no doubt the poor woman was shaken. But nothing is perfect in this world, Mr. Wooster, and I have had my cross to bear. For seven years I have lived in constant apprehension lest some evilly-disposed person might lure her from my employment. To my certain knowledge she has received offers, lucrative offers, to accept service elsewhere. You may judge of my dismay, Mr. Wooster, when only this morning the bolt fell. She gave notice!"

"Good Lord!"

"Your consternation does credit, if I may say so, to the heart of the author of a 'A Red, Red Summer Rose.' But I am thankful to say the worst has not happened. The matter has been adjusted. Jane is not leaving me."

"Good egg!"

"Good egg, indeed—though the expression is not familiar to me. I do not remember having come across it in your books. And, speaking of your books, may I say that what has impressed me about them even more than the moving poignancy of the actual narrative, is your philosophy of life. If there were more men like you, Mr. Wooster, London would be a better place."

This was dead opposite to my Aunt Agatha's philosophy of life, she having always rather given me to understand that it is the presence in it of chappies like me that makes London more or less of a plague-spot; but I let it go.

'Let me tell you, Mr. Wooster, that I appreciate your splendid defiance of the outworn fetishes of a purblind social system. I appreciate it! *You* are big enough to see that rank is but the guinea stamp and that, in the magnificent words of Lord Bletchmore in 'Only a Factory Girl,' 'Be her origin ne'er so humble, a good woman is the equal of the finest lady on earth!'"

I sat up.

"I say! Do you think that?"

"I do, Mr. Wooster. I am ashamed to say that there was a time when I was like other men, a slave to the idiotic convention which we call Class Distinction. But, since I read your books——"

I might have known it. Jeeves had done it again.

"You think it's all right for a chappie in what you might call a certain social position to marry a girl of what you might describe as the lower classes?"

"Most assuredly I do, Mr. Wooster."

I took a deep breath, and slipped him the good news.

"Young Bingo—your nephew, you know—wants to marry a waitress," I said.

"I honour him for it," said old Little.

"You don't object?"

"On the contrary."

I took another deep breath, and shifted to the sordid side of the business.

"I hope you won't think I'm butting in, don't you know," I said, "but—er—well, how about it?"

"I fear I do not quite follow you."

"Well, I mean to say, his allowance and all that. The money you're good enough to give him. He was rather hoping that you might see your way to jerking up the total a bit."

Old Little shook his head regretfully.

"I fear that can hardly be managed. You see, a man in my position is compelled to save every penny. I will gladly continue my nephew's existing allowance, but beyond that I cannot go. It would not be fair to my wife."

"What! But you're not married?"

"Not yet. But I propose to enter upon that holy state almost immediately. The lady who for years has cooked so well for me honoured me by accepting my hand this very morning." A cold gleam of triumph came into his eye. "Now let 'em try to get her away from me!" he muttered, defiantly.

fiancée of yours—Miss Watson, you know—the cook, you know—well, the long and the short of it is that she's chosen riches instead of honest worth, if you know what I mean."

"Sir?"

"She's handed you the mitten and gone and got engaged to old Mr. Little!"

"Indeed, sir?"

"You don't seem much upset."

"The fact is, sir, I had anticipated some such outcome."

I stared at him. "Then what on earth did you suggest the scheme for?"

"To tell you the truth, sir, I was not wholly

"It was the lunch of a lifetime, but I might have been eating sawdust for all the good it did me."

"YOUNG Mr. Little has been trying frequently during the afternoon to reach you on the telephone, sir," said Jeeves that night, when I got home.

"I'll bet he has," I said. I had sent poor old Bingo an outline of the situation by messenger-boy shortly after lunch.

"He seemed a trifle agitated."

"I don't wonder. Jeeves," I said, "brace up and bite the bullet. I'm afraid I've bad news for you."

"Sir?"

That scheme of yours—reading those books to old Mr. Little and all that—has blown out a fuse."

"They did not soften him?"

"They did. That's the whole bally trouble. Jeeves, I'm sorry to say that averse from a severance of my relations with Miss Watson. In fact, I greatly desired it. I respect Miss Watson exceedingly, but I have seen for a long time that we were not suited. Now, the *other* young person with whom I have an understanding——"

"Great Scot, Jeeves! There isn't another?"

"Yes, sir."

"How long has this been going on?"

"For some weeks, sir. I was greatly attracted by her when I first met her at a subscription dance at Camberwell."

"My sainted aunt! Not——"

Jeeves inclined his head gravely.

"Yes, sir. By an odd coincidence it is the same young person that young Mr. Little—— I have placed the cigarettes on the small table. Good night, sir."

(*This is the first of a great new Jeeves Series.*)

DEAR SANTA KLAS PLES BRING ME A GOLLYWOG
WHAT A DREAM!
by
MABEL LUCIE ATTWELL
ON XMAS EVE LITTLE JANE DREAMT THAT SHE WAS ON THE ROOF LOOKING FOR SANTA CLAUS.
PRESENTLY UP HE CAME. "WHAT HAVE WE HERE?" HE CRIED. "I'LL POP IT INTO MY BAG. I'M RATHER SHORT OF TOYS."
"GRACIOUS!"

AND IN A MINUTE JANE FOUND HERSELF IN GOLLY'S STOCKING.
"HA—HA!" CRIED GOLLY. "NOW I'LL CARRY *YOU*—LIKE A CERTAIN YOUNG LADY CARRIES ME—
AND USE YOU AS A BALL AND——"
LOVE FROM SANTA CLAUS
THEN JANE WOKE UP. "I'LL *NEVER* USE THIS GOLLY LIKE *THAT*," SHE SAID.

Mr Brannigan

by

CROSBIE GARSTIN

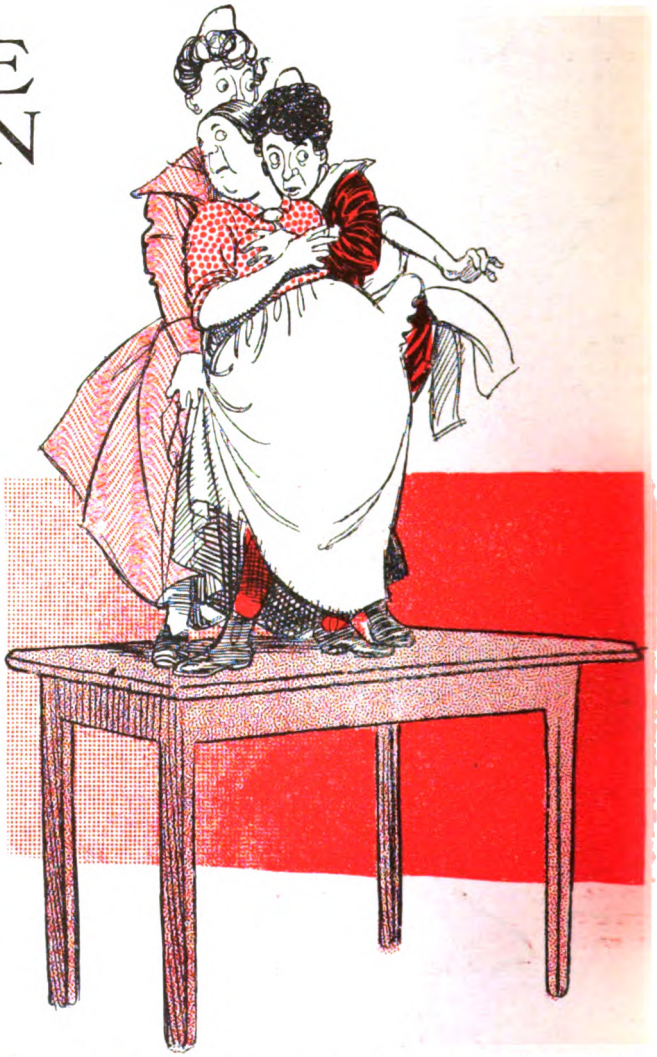
ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR WATTS & L.R BRIGHTWELL

MR. BRANNIGAN, despite his name, was not born in the Isle of Unrest or even of Irish parentage. He first saw light in Cape Colony, among some boulders at the feet of the great Zwarte Bergen. My cousin George bought him from a Kaffir for sixpence and a plug of tobacco and haled him home in an old leather hat-box.

Mr. Brannigan is a meerkat, or, more strictly speaking, a Cape ground-squirrel; a reddish-brownish-yellowish little critter with a receding chin, an inquiring nose, and black eye-markings. He was named after our local gombeen man, who also has a receding chin, an inquiring nose, and, usually — after quarter-days — black eye-markings.

Our Mr. Brannigan had a most agreeable time aboard ship coming home. By night he reposed in the hat-box, under George's bunk, next to the radiators. By day he took George for walks on deck at the end of a string. His first public appearance caused a mild stampede among the lady passengers, but once they came to understand that he was neither rat nor ferret, but merely a meerkat with no fell designs upon their skirts, they became very civil and laboured diligently to burst him with delicacies filched from the saloon tables. Mr. Brannigan did not actually burst, but on one or two occasions it was touch and go—another crumb would have done it.

He arrived at George's Irish home late one evening and was emptied out of his hat-box on to the drawing-room carpet.



"On the kitchen table was posed a group which might well have represented 'Saved from the Wreck' in *tableaux vivants*."

The two Sealyham terriers, forgotten in the wild moment of homecoming, immediately fell upon him as one dog. Something went off in their faces, something that combined the explosive hiss of many siphons with the chatter of manifold machine-guns. They were extremely surprised, retired precipitately under the sofa, and remained there, saying rather less than nothing, for the remainder of the evening. Mr. Brannigan calmly hoisted himself over the fender and, squatting on his tail in the hearth, warmed his toes and tummy at the fire as if he had been doing it all his life.

We laughed at the little figure sitting silhouetted before the red blaze, and turned to hear the story of George's adventures in wonderland. Twenty minutes later, in the midst of an epic yarn of how an immodest hen-ostrich had chased him pretty nearly from the Cape to Cairo, came a salvo of appalling shrieks from the kitchen.

"Sinn Fein," said George, and—a thoughtful Government having deprived its loyal adherents of wherewithal to defend themselves and it—picked up a poker. "Come on, man, quick!"

I snatched a Maori war-club from the hall wall and together we dashed to the rescue. On the pedestal of the kitchen table was posed a group which might well have represented "Saved from the Wreck" in *tableaux vivants*. Mrs. Dowling, the cook, in a more or less fainting condition, occupied the central position, supported on either hand by Mary, the parlourmaid, and Bridget, the housemaid. All were displaying an amplitude of calf (Mrs. Dowling and Bridget were mistakenly holding up each other's skirts) and invoking—in order of efficacy—1. The British Army. 2. The R.I.C. 3. Heaven.

We looked about for the masked and armed intruders, but could see none.

"What's up? What's the matter?" we inquired of Mrs. Dowling.

"The rat, the great red rat," she moaned dramatically, and fainted altogether.

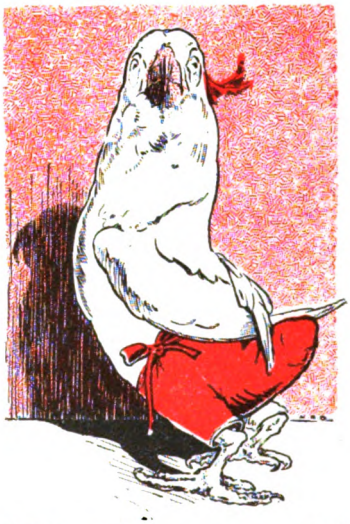
Looking round, we discovered Mr. Brannigan imperturbably devouring the cat's supper.

It is said, apparently with truth, that strong antipathies often precede strong friendships, for after this distressing episode Mrs. Dowling and Mr. Brannigan became well-nigh inseparable, only those dainties which his lordship had no use for reached the dining-room, and he ousted the cat from its place before the kitchen fire and the cockatoo from its mistress's affections. The cat, a decadent tortoisehell, made no physical protest, but the cockatoo, a memento of the late Mr. Dowling's enforced excursion to Australia, was built of sterner stuff. He took up a good strategic position on the top of the dresser and bided his hour. At length, one morning, it came. Mrs. Dowling was in the pantry and Mr. Brannigan entered the kitchen alone. The astute fowl waited until the meerkat was directly under him and then nose-dived. Mr. Brannigan suddenly found himself pinned to the matting with a flapping, screaming fury tearing at him with beak and claws.

Providence has bequeathed the meerkat a back of solid leather as a protection against just such bolts from the blue. Mr. Brannigan rolled up like a hedgehog and sent out a shrill S.O.S. for Mrs. Dowling. The cockatoo, finding he was making no impression on his enemy's back, directed his attentions elsewhere. Mrs. Dowling's basting spoon took him on the solar plexus just as he was on the point of driving his hooked beak into Mr. Brannigan's bright black eyes. It was a near thing. Mr. Brannigan squirmed under a chair and the cockatoo fluttered back to his sanctuary, the dresser-top, satisfied that he had at least succeeded in giving the meerkat a scare that would keep him out of the kitchen for ever. In which he erred, for Mr. Brannigan returned the very next day. It was Mary's afternoon out. Bridget was in the yard exchanging badinage with a groom,

and Mrs. Dowling was aloft snatching a well-earned siesta. The kitchen was empty except for the cockatoo. He perched on the wide window-sill in a shaft of sunlight. It was a warm afternoon; he drowsed. The kitchen door was ajar; two bright black eyes peered through the crack and took in the situation at a glance. Something slid noiselessly across the kitchen under cover of the table.

Something swarmed stealthily up Mrs. Dowling's rocker and from thence to the window-sill. The cockatoo was aroused from his comfortable dreams by an excruciating twitch at his stern end. Something had him by the tail, and the something was Mr. Brannigan. He had a mouthful of feathers, and was wrenching at them for all he was worth. The cockatoo made a hopeless attempt to strike backwards, was twitched off his balance, and at the same moment the first bunch of feathers came adrift. Before he could recover himself Mr. Brannigan had taken a fresh purchase. And so the sorry plucking went on. The cockatoo flapped and scratched and struck and screeched, all to no avail; he had been caught napping, and Mr. Brannigan—to employ a vulgarism — " had got him by the short hairs."



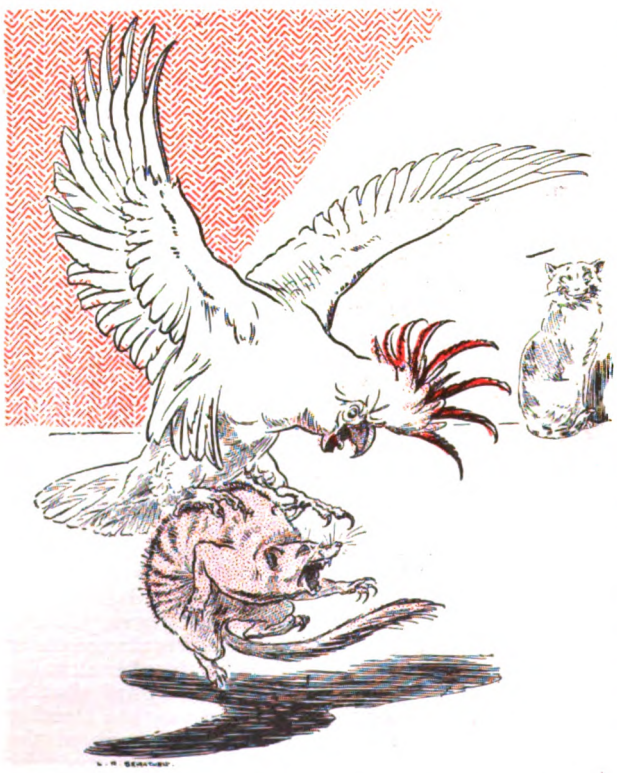
"The cockatoo was provided with a pair of red flannel bathing-drawers to see him through the cold weather."

"I declare ye'd think a fox was afther playin' Kiss-in-the-Ring wid a tribe uv geese, the way my kitchen was whin I came below," said Mrs. Dowling later. "Before God, it was knee-dape in feathers, an' the owld bird was sittin' atop uv the dhresser, his bare back to the wall, cursin' an' blindin' the way ye'd be desthroyed to hear him. As for himself, the little Brannigan, where was he, think you?" (She giggled delightedly.) "F'why, back in the drawin'-room, to be shure, curled up aslape before the fire as innocent as a forget-me-not."

The denuded cockatoo was provided with a pair of red flannel bathing-drawers to see him through the cold weather, and in due course he recovered his plumage—but never his pluck. Henceforth Mr. Brannigan strolled about the kitchen unmolested, monarch of all it purveyed.

As the winter drew in, the meerkat began to feel the cold o' nights, and conceived the bright idea of sharing George's couch. The first intimation George had of this was to wake sweating out of a grisly nightmare (in which great hairy spiders were crawling all over him) at two o'clock one morning, to find Mr. Brannigan peacefully slumbering up the right leg of his, George's, pyjamas. After that my gentleman was put to sleep among the hot-water pipes in the bath-room linen cupboard.

On December 12th came a letter from our Aunt Judith announcing her intention of spending Christmas with us. We were not

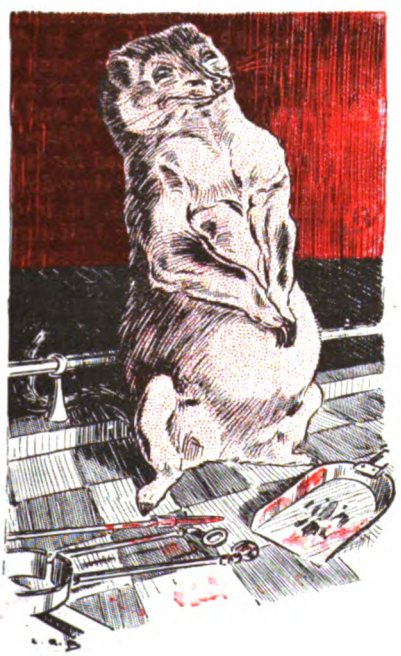


"Mr. Brannigan suddenly found a flapping, screaming fury tearing at him with beak and claws."

" Aunt Judith stampeded through us like a wounded buffalo and banged into her own room."

exactly hilarious at the prospect, as we were looking forward to a somewhat cheery Yule, and our Aunt Judith is a blight, a frost, a bromide, guaranteed to kill all joy within a ten-mile radius; a massive, masculine old frump with a penchant for militant causes and other people's affairs. However, as dutiful nieces and nephews we wrote saying how delighted we should be to see her—at the same time we thought it only fair to warn her that the Sinn Fein had threatened to murder us; we were boycotted; all the servants had given notice; the kitchen range was out of order; the water-main had burst, and, finally, rabies, rinderpest, and foot-and-mouth disease were rampant in the immediate neighbourhood, and George was breaking out all over with funny purple spots. In spite of all Aunt Judith came. She came solely because she somehow got the notion into her head that she wasn't wanted. She's that sort.

She arrived at 10.30 on the night of December 23rd. Next morning, when I turned out, I found a queue of people in dressing-gowns forming up outside the bath-room door. My cousins George and Clarissa were there, a girl-friend of the latter, and a subaltern from the Curragh. Aunt Judith was in possession, they said, and was hogging all the hot water. We lit cigarettes and played catch with sponges. Of a sudden, scream upon blood-curdling scream sounded from the bath-room, the door crashed open, and out rushed Aunt Judith clad only in a towel—and not too much of that. She stampeded through us like a wounded buffalo, knocked the wind out of George, bowled over the subaltern, banged into her own room, locked, barred, and barricaded the door, and screamed some more.



We stared at each other in speechless amazement. Clarissa broke the silence.

'Look! Oh, do look!" she spluttered, and folded over the banister, gurgling helplessly.

We looked. The bath-room door was open, so was that of the linen cupboard. In the centre of the bath-room sat Mr. Brannigan, tentatively investigating some articles of feminine attire — we had forgotten all about him.

Aunt Judith breakfasted in her room and left by the noon train that same day. She did not even wish us or kiss us good-bye; she seemed reluctant to meet our eyes. We spent a very cheery Christmas after all, and Mr. Brannigan was the toast of honour.

CHARLIE CHAPLIN

by

A·B·WALKLEY

"THINGS are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be; why, then, should we wish to be deceived?" These wise words of Bishop Butler, some two centuries old, are still valid in most regions of human experience, and, among them, in the film-world. It is one of the discoveries of our time that a strip of celluloid wound upon a spool can be so manipulated as to project upon a screen moving pictures of events. As a consequence, scenes of actual life, or of that fictitious life called drama, can be recorded, packed into a tin box, and re-enacted, exactly as they occurred, whenever and wherever you please. The whole living pageant of the world is thus made portable. Things which happened on the other side of the globe are brought to your door and happen again before your eyes. The magic carpet of the Arabian Nights was nothing by comparison, for that transported you to the scene of action, whereas, without budging, you get the action now transported to you. At the cost of a few pence you annihilate time and space.

Why should we wish to be deceived? What is the use of condemning the film for its lack of speech or its lack of high artistic taste? What is the sense of comparing it, to its disadvantage, with the spoken drama? Things are what they are; and the film, whatever its limitations, is a permanent gain for human life, a stupendous extension of the range of visual experience. Silent, it has no frontiers of language to bar it out. Little wonder, then, that it has already created one of the greatest of world-industries. It is said that more than enough film to go round the earth at the Equator annually leaves the United States of America for foreign countries. It is also said that this earth-girdling film records little, if anything, of actual American life; but a mainly imaginary world of cowboys, redskins, and crooks. Very likely, for the workaday millions who form the film public are more interested in romance than in history. Hence Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, who embody the romantic ideals of that simple-minded public. Also it likes fun, spontaneous, light-hearted, not too subtle. Hence Charlie Chaplin, the most renowned, best-paid funny man in the whole world, the most triumphantly successful *pitre* in all history, the most popular of public favourites in the annals of popularity.

DEFENDING his friend Garrick against the charge of being spoiled by popularity, Johnson said that, if *he* were in the actor's shoes, he would have two tall fellows with long staves to keep the crowd away. Charlie Chaplin, revisiting London, has found a division of Metropolitan Police only just able to save him from the press of his admirers. His name is more familiar in the mouths of men than was the name of Cæsar in the Roman Empire. He has become a legendary figure, the hero of innumerable myths. He is said to have realized the possibilities of wealth "beyond the dreams of avarice." When he emerges from his hotel thousands crowd round him to press his hand, to beg a petal from his buttonhole: the air is rent with wild shouts of "Charlie!" He might almost be asked to touch them for the King's Evil! It is difficult to believe that this fabulous being is only a man, after all. A very modest man, I am told by those who know him, and of simple tastes. At a choice repast, offered him at a West-end club, he asked for treacle roly-poly, "because," he said, "they don't give you suet in America." Indeed, he is quite unspoiled by his popularity: half-amused by it, which shows that he is a philosopher, and half-frightened, which shows that he is human.

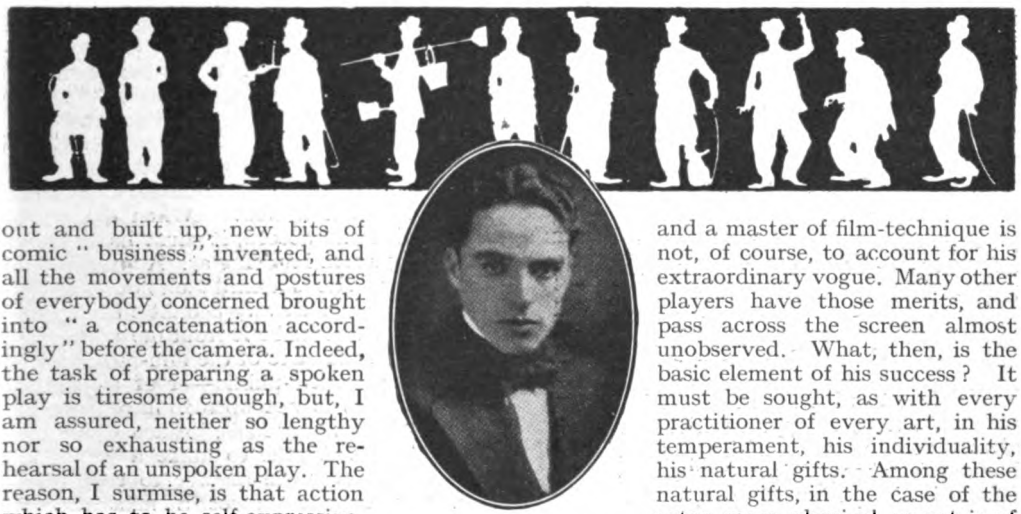
He may well be frightened! World-wide popularity such as his, perfervid, strepitous, well-nigh crazy in the violence of its manifestations, is a burden heavy to be borne; it may not only turn the head, but corrupt the heart. This man has found himself acclaimed as a benefactor by whole populations, he has seen glory face to face, not the quiet glory of the princes of thought in their studies and laboratories, not the glory of great poets or romancers testified in cold print, but the rapturous reverberating glory of crowds in every street, and on every railway-platform and dock-quay, surging, cheering, mad with excitement on seeing their hero. He has had

receptions that are not vouchsafed to kings. This unique, monstrous experience might breed in unstable natures (and your public entertainer is seldom phlegmatic) something like the Neronian mood of unbounded caprice and contempt for the ordinary restraints of human life. Immense popularity not seldom has this result. Wilkes, fortunately for him, was never a Wilkite. But Chatham, at the height of his power, became strangely capricious, and, as we should now say, "impossible." In our own day we have seen D'Annunzio lose his balance. And we all remember the *bizarreries*, at one time, of the great Sarah.

IT says much, then, for Mr. Chaplin that he has kept a cool head in riding the whirlwind and directing the storm of his popularity. What has helped him, no doubt (as it helped Sarah in the long run), is the urgent, daily need of "carrying on," of attending to the entertainer's business of providing the public with entertainment. The public is master of its favourites, as well as slave. Inventing films is hard work, and rehearsing them a continuous discipline. Life at Los Angeles cannot be all "beer and skittles," when films have to be thought out and built up, new bits of comic "business" invented, and all the movements and postures of everybody concerned brought into "a concatenation accordingly" before the camera. Indeed, the task of preparing a spoken play is tiresome enough, but, I am assured, neither so lengthy nor so exhausting as the rehearsal of an unspoken play. The reason, I surmise, is that action which has to be self-expressive, without the usual aid of speech, is dependent upon a variety of infinitely minute details, which it is a work of great nicety and painful elaboration to regulate. In other words, the art of the film, like any other art, has its special *technique*. It does not come by nature, nor even by the practice of an allied art, as many stage-players have found out when they have come to act for the screen.

That Charlie Chaplin, whether as film-inventor or film-actor, has a consummate mastery of the appropriate *technique* is beyond all doubt. Whatever he has to express is proper for kinematographic expression: in other words, is something always visible to the eye and easily comprehensible by it. The so-called "captions," or explanatory words accompanying the action on the screen, are in his case a superfluity and an impertinence. You *see* what he is doing and *know* what he means by it. This indicates an alert and a special intelligence on his part, quite equal to the intelligence shown by the stage-player in understanding and "composing" his part—perhaps even superior to it, owing to the limitation of expressive means, just as the superiority of Cavanagh, the fives-player, Hazlitt's hero, was shown by the skill of his play with fist clenched and one arm behind his back. Technical competence is a first requisite in every good actor, speaking or silent. Sarah's *technique* was always magnificent. There were a few weak spots in both Duse's and Ellen Terry's. I conjecture that Garrick was a technically perfect actor, and that Edmund Kean was not. Great genius can afford some technical lapses, though it would be better without them. There is not a single flaw in Mr. Chaplin's *technique*.

But to say that Charlie Chaplin is intelligent and a master of film-technique is not, of course, to account for his extraordinary vogue. Many other players have those merits, and pass across the screen almost unobserved. What, then, is the basic element of his success? It must be sought, as with every practitioner of every art, in his temperament, his individuality, his natural gifts. Among these natural gifts, in the case of the actor, mere physical aspect is of prime importance. Why one man's face and figure should be comic and another's not, who can say? Philosophic inquirers into the ludicrous try to say, I know, but their explanations are generally themselves examples of the ludicrous. It seems unfair that so much of an actor's power to impress or to divert should depend upon physical qualifications which he did not create and could not alter, if he would. But so it is. There are even film-actors (as recent police reports from Los Angeles have disagreeably



reminded us) who have achieved success by being abnormally fat. Mr. Chaplin's *physique* does not sin by excess. He is small, slight, alert—but why describe what is familiar to the whole world? What man, woman, or child does not know that little figure with the abbreviated moustache, the bowler hat a size too small, the boots some sizes too large, and the now legendary "slap stick"? It can be seen in every bazaar, reproduced in marble, in terra-cotta, in barley-sugar, in soap, in stuffed rags. It has a smile alternating between a leer and a smirk, a brilliant 'knowing" eye. The smile can be very sweet—it is one of Mr. Chaplin's chief charms—and the eye indicates that its owner is very much awake to all the hostile stratagems that may beset a funny man in this wicked world. The usual expression of the face is one of innocence, but innocence worn as a mask for guile; at times it takes on an air of extravagant terror, but, whatever the dangers, you know that they will be successfully eluded. However buffeted by fate, Mr. Chaplin always "comes up smiling." That is one secret of his attraction for us. He is, against immense odds, imperturbably cheerful. Kick him about like a football, smother him in flour or soapsuds, run over him with a motor-car, stick him in liquid tar in the middle of Broadway, and he remains cheerful. There is something more, you feel, in this spectacle than the pure natural joy of mere "thwackings"; there is a lesson in the art of living. "Live dangerously," was a precept of Nietzsche's. Charlie Chaplin adds: "And come up smiling every time."

A MAN to whom existence is a continuous series of practical jokes, to whom the rubs of life are all welcome opportunities for alert resource and unfailing good humour, in whose philosophy "cheerfulness is always breaking in," who outwits his opponents without a grain of malice and takes all experience as an immensely funny game, which he is bound to win—such is Charlie Chaplin on the film. And the giddy rapidity of the film centuples this joyous effect. You are whirled into a mood of optimism at a breakneck speed that leaves you no moment to reflect. You laugh with the uncritical, unquestioning laughter of the child. '*Interroge-toi quand tu ris*," wrote Stendhal to his sister, and it is sage advice. But the film gives you no time to act upon it.

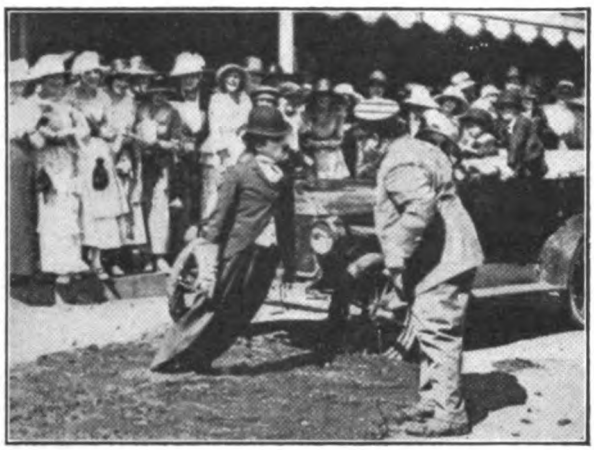
The objection may sometimes be heard that Charlie Chaplin is only one of many; that knockabout farce is knockabout farce, and clowning is clowning, all the world over. That is a palpable error. True art is always an individual thing, outside all classification, and Mr. Chaplin is like no one but himself. Amid surroundings made, you would think, too hot to hold him, he remains as cool as a cucumber, with an air of mental abstraction; earthquakes happen and turn him upside down but cannot shake him from his brown study; he is modestly conscious of leading a charmed life; his smile never leaves him, a mystic symbol of permanence in a world of kaleidoscopic change. He is a Don Quixote who tilts at windmills, and, what is more, knocks them over like ninepins. He is a mischievous Puck who enjoys the spectacle of out-manœuvred and outstripped humanity: "Lord, what fools these mortals be!" It is the triumph of mind over matter, of fun over the solemnsides, of good humour over evil chance. This figure is, in the strict sense of the term, evangelical: it has brought tidings of joy to multitudes dispirited by the common round, the daily task. It has caught their imagination and won their hearts.

It is idle to say that their taste might be better. "You cannot," as Burke said, "indict a nation." When the world laughs with one accord, it must have found something worth laughing at. A great public favourite is a hard fact, not to be disposed of by any pedantic theories of taste. Far be it from me to suggest that the taste of the film-public (or of the theatre-public—or of any other public) is not open to improvement. "How many fools," asked Chamfort, "does it take to make a public?" Whatever the answer to that question, you cannot expect a miscellaneous crowd to be composed of refined connoisseurs, amateurs of the delicate and the supersubtle. Few of the millions who frequent the "moving pictures" have any knowledge of the pictures that do not move; many of them have no knowledge of any other drama than the silent. On the serious side their appetite is for lurid romance, which is poor stuff, but, even so, better than the penny dreadful or the dime novel which used to be their only literature. On the comic side, they

want wild farce. Charlie Chaplin has devulgarized this for them, given it a touch of fantasy, informed its spirit by a whimsical invention and a happy temperament. *Eppure si muove!* One fine day their taste will demand something better still, and "Charlie Chaplin Films" will be handed over to the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments. But the time is not yet.

What constitutes the peculiar element in Charlie Chaplin's popularity is that it is "the limit."

To compute the number of his admirers is beyond the resources of arithmetic. If only they would be content to admire him, silently, in the penumbra of the picture-house! But there he is not himself, his actual living self, but only his shadow, projected on a screen, a kinematographer's copy—and they are not to be baulked of the rare chance of seeing, cheering, embracing the original. Here is one reason why film heroes, when they reveal themselves in the flesh, receive more enthusiastic welcomes than any other men, than great play-actors or leading politicians or conquering generals. For these others have impressed the world in their own persons, whereas the film-actor has achieved that feat vicariously, through his photograph. His case is paradoxical: he is at once the most and the least known of men. Shadows we are and shadows we pursue; all the keener, then, our eagerness for the relief, when opportunity offers, of seeing and touching the flesh-and-blood realities that have cast the shadows. The shadow, we know, will outlive the reality. Once the "movie" actor is recorded on the film, he is there for ever. It is his great advantage over the stage-player, whose effect dies with him. The whole company of a film-play may perish in a catastrophe, but they will remain as kinematographically alive as ever. While they remain alive in very truth the crowd yearns to see them and know them as solid bodies, not flat portraits, above all to hear them *speak*. What is the real Charlie Chaplin like without his tiny bowler and his slap stick? How does he talk? The curiosity of average human nature about a mystery mainly accounts for the vast numbers of noisy investigators who "mob" Mr. Chaplin in his walks abroad.



And he is approached, because he is approachable. From the crowned heads and statesmen and generals whom they cheer the profane vulgar must keep their distance. Etiquette and bearskins and police intervene. But "our Charlie" is the people's own, one of themselves, a democratic hero who has made his fame and his fortune by pleasing the democracy. His fortune! Yes, the wild rumours about that give an additional incentive for pursuing him in the flesh. It is a vulgar fact, no doubt, yet easy to understand. Millions of toilers who find it a hard struggle to make a bare living are naturally keen to see the fortunate being, sprung from their own order, who by a happy combination of a funny face and an alert intelligence with a new invention in photography is able to earn what is reported to be one of the largest incomes in the world. It is a commonplace that material prizes are somewhat capriciously distributed. We can all, however, be glad to think that Charlie Chaplin's wealth is not "dirty money"; unstained by any concession to the baser appetites, it is the reward of the successful appeal to millions of men of an individual, ingenious, novel form of fun.

Photos. by courtesy of The Western Import Co., Ltd., and Film Booking Offices, Ltd.

P. G. WODEHOUSE

The Creator of "JEEVES" and "ARCHIE"

IN these depressing days the gift of humour is worth more than the ransom of kings. P. G. Wodehouse, known generally as "P. G.," is one of the world's greatest humorists. That his work is appreciated in his own country is a lasting reproof to the pessimist who can see no hope left for Britain.

Aged three months.

To interest and amuse, and to take people out of themselves and make them laugh and forget, this is the mission of P. G. Wodehouse. But if you were to ask him what his mission was, why he wrote, and for what purpose, he would most probably roar with laughter and reach for his note-book and jot down another idea for a story: the story of the high-souled young humorist who had a mission.

Aged seven years.

P. G. wanders happily up and down the world, watching humanity at work and at play, like a rather curious and intelligent boy who has just left school and has not yet had time to lose hope and interest. Where most of us see only gloom and despair and ugliness, P. G. sees humour and laughter and beauty. Hence, of course, his popularity.

His career has been a record of hard work. From his earliest days he always intended to be a writer. At Dulwich, while he humoured the authorities by reaching the Classical Sixth, his real education seems, on looking back, to have consisted in reading W. S. Gilbert and James Payn. The one immediate result of his classical studies was a series of extravagant farces, written in verse and arranged after the fashion of the Greek tragedies, with his acquaintances, masters and boys alike, drawn as citizens of ancient Athens.

When the time came for him to leave Dulwich he was informed that as literature was too poor a career for any self-respecting individual, he must enter a bank. He obeyed, though reluctantly. He did not like the bank, nor did the bank like him—professionally, at least. His immediate superior told him, finally, more in sorrow than in anger, or perhaps it was the other way round, that he would never, unless he devoted more time to his study of banking, make a success of commerce. P. G. agreed with the utmost composure, and straightway resigned his post. He was even then earning more money from his pen in his spare time than the bank paid him, or was ever likely to pay. He branched out boldly as a writer, in spite of the warnings of well-mean-

Aged twelve.

ing relatives. His success as a writer should have been, if the prophecies had been correct, uncertain. As a matter of fact, it was about the most certain thing that ever happened.

He laid the foundation of his future prosperity on the "By the Way" column of the *Globe*, then one of the brightest features of London journalism. In due course P. G. became editor of the column himself, and each day for some years turned out a constant stream of humorous paragraphs and light verse that never fell below his own high standard.

His work of late years is too well known to need detailed description. He is an established favourite everywhere, a real humorist. But it was as a writer of school stories that he made his name. Has any magazine ever had serials that aroused more interest in the English public schools than did P. G.'s school stories in the *Captain*? It is no exaggeration to say now that these tales broke the old tradition of school stories, and introduced to the reading public the English public schoolboy as he really is—a healthy, careless, hero-worshipping, sport-loving young animal with a code of honour and ideals that might with advantage be copied in other walks of life.

His hobbies and pursuits are many. His knowledge of sport, so clearly expressed in his stories, is founded on personal experience. He has in his time played most games. At Dulwich he was in the Eleven for two years, being given his place in the team for his bowling, although he had a cut—his one stroke at that time—which was in its way a terror. By constant practice, and in spite of his glasses, he made himself a good field. He was also a fine footballer, getting his cap in a season when Dulwich lost no school matches. In addition, P. G. has done much boxing, and he has, to the horror of all good Rugger men, played Soccer. In these days, however, he has abandoned even cricket, and ponders of an evening after a hard day's golf on how ever he managed to live before he discovered the only game. He motors, of course. He reads enormously: old books and new books — anything. He likes Persian kittens and bulldogs and parrots — grey parrots that can talk to a man sensibly.

Aged twenty.

He has already written about twenty-five books, as well as musical comedies, revues, and plays, and is still only forty. What seems even more wonderful is that he keeps on working at the same high rate of production without ever being at a loss for material. He does not know exactly how he gets his ideas, but the ideas come almost automatically — in the street, at the theatre, in trains or tubes, anywhere, anyhow.

Perhaps his most successful character is Jeeves, the inimitable and ever-resourceful valet, a new series of whose adventures commences in the present number.

Present Day.

THE SINISTER QUEST OF NORMAN GREYES

by

E·PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

No. 1
THE
UNDISCOVERED MURDER

By MICHAEL.

THE duel—or shall I call it, perhaps, vendetta?—between Norman Greyes and myself—known under many aliases but christened Michael Sayers—commenced on the morning of the third of November, some years ago, when I left my suburban home at Brixton to catch my usual train to the City, and found myself confronted upon the pavement with the immediate chances of life or death.

I will admit that I was taken by surprise. Every man at Scotland Yard was known to me by name and reputation, and I was perfectly convinced in my own mind that there was no one in that much-abused but, from our point of view, admirable institution, capable of penetrating the secrets of my daily life and discovering in me, the reputed Thomas Pugsley, leather agent, of St. Thomas's Street, Bermondsey, and Number 138, Woollerton Road, Brixton, the most accomplished and daring criminal of modern times. I knew at once, when I saw the police sergeant, with his two plain-clothes companions, crossing the road towards me, that someone else was taking a hand in the game. Even at that moment, when I had little time for observation, I saw the well-remembered figure of a man emerge from behind the curtains of Number 133, opposite, and it took me exactly ten seconds to realize that henceforth, after I had escaped from this present dilemma, I should have to move my pieces with greater circumspection across the chessboard of life. I recognized him the instant he appeared before the window. There were a few streaks of grey in his black hair, but his keen, grey eyes, his forceful mouth, his long, lean face were all unchanged. He was the one man in the old days whom we had all feared, the man whose retirement from the Force we had celebrated with a small but very select little dinner at the Café Royal. My old hatred of him blazed up as I realized the voluntary nature of his return to the career which he had abandoned. I made up my mind then that if ever the time came when I should be the arbiter of his fate, this man should have no quarter.

The street was a short one, and within fifty yards of a bustling thoroughfare. Nevertheless, at that early hour there were not many people about, and, as it afterwards transpired, witnesses of the spirited few seconds which followed were almost non-existent. It has always been my principle that the best form of defence is prompt attack. Whilst the sergeant, therefore, stood with his mouth open ready to inform me that he held a warrant for my arrest, I shot him through the right shoulder-blade. He staggered and would have fallen but for his two companions. Before they had propped him up against the railings and recovered from their surprise, I was round the corner of the street and in an empty telephone booth in the adjacent post-office.

I have always maintained that the

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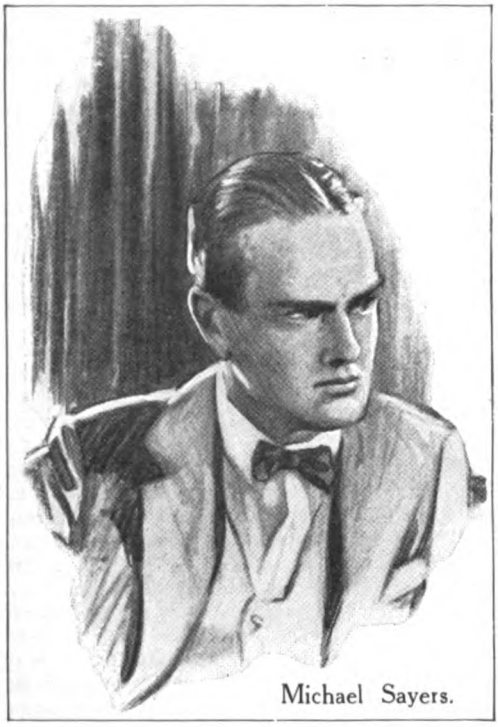
Telephone Company is an unfairly abused institution. On this occasion, at any rate, my defence of it was justified. Within thirty seconds of asking for Number 1,000 Hop, I was speaking to the warehouseman whose duty it was to dust and keep in good order my samples of leather, which, to tell the truth, were rarely used. My few rapid words of instruction spoken, I turned my attention to those ingenious devices which, although savouring a little of the trickster, have on more than one occasion assisted me in preserving my liberty. I turned my overcoat, which, in place of a sober black garment, now became a covering of light grey tweed with a belt behind. I rolled my trousers up to the knee, disclosing very well-cut brown leather gaiters. I left my black bowler hat in the telephone box, replacing it with a tweed cap, removed with a little pang of regret the most wonderful dark moustache which the hand of artist had ever fashioned, adjusted a pair of spectacles, and made my exit.



Michael Sayers.

There was some commotion in the street outside, and the freckled young lady behind the counter paid scant attention to me.

"The telephone service doesn't get any better," I said, pleasantly. "It's taken me nearly ten minutes to get two numbers."

She accepted my complaint with equanimity. Her attention was still on the street outside.

"What is it? A fire?" I asked.

She shook her head.

"I don't know," she answered. "Did you pay for both your calls?"

I assured her that I had done so, and made my way into the street. There was a little crowd in Woollerton Road, and a motor ambulance came dashing by. I strolled along the broad thoroughfare until I came to a taxi-cab. I hailed the man and hesitated for a moment, glancing up at the sky.

"Is it going to keep fine?" I asked the driver.

He considered the point for a moment.

"Don't fancy there's much more rain about, guv'nor," he replied.

"Then drive to Streatham Hill Station," I directed.

From Streatham Hill I travelled to London Bridge by the electric railway, and from London Bridge I took a taxi to Waterloo. From Waterloo I caught the ten-forty train to Brookwood, and from the hotel there, where I paused for some slight refreshment, I engaged a taxi-cab to drive me to "Linkside," the country retreat of a certain Mr. James Stanfield, situated on the fringe of Woking golf links. William, my man-of-all-work, was digging in the garden, and welcomed me with the bucolic indifference of his class. Janet, his niece, admitted me promptly to the house, and received my unexpected visit with that respectful lack of curiosity, heritage of her earlier training as parlourmaid. Yet on that morning, perhaps more than any other in my life, I felt a shadow of uneasiness concerning Janet. I watched her in silence, stooping over the fire, a young woman with a figure whose perfection her ill-fitting corsets and clothes failed altogether to conceal, pale of complexion, with introspective, queer-coloured eyes, close-lipped, and with a mass of well-brushed, glossy brown hair. When she stood up, a little flushed with her exertions, she faced me for a moment, waiting for orders. I am not a susceptible man, but it struck me for the first time that the girl was more than ordinarily good-looking.

"Nothing has happened during my absence, Janet?" I inquired.

"Nothing at all, sir," she replied.

"Nobody called?"

"There was a rate-collector," she said. 'He wanted to know your address in London."

'Did you tell him?"

"I do not know it, sir," she reminded me, quietly.

I removed my spectacles and polished them. I am an expert physiognomist, but the girl's impassivity baffled me.

"I will leave it with you before I go away next time," I promised. "Please put me out a grey tweed golf suit and stockings."

"Shall you be requiring lunch, sir?" she asked.

"I will lunch at the golf club," I told her. "I shall dine at home."

"Is there anything particular you would like for dinner, sir?"

"I leave everything to you," I replied.

She left me without further remark.

In the passage of the club-house I met the secretary.

"Are you wanting a game this afternoon, Mr. Stanfield?" he asked.

"I should be glad of one," I replied.

"There's a man just come down," he went on, "four handicap. You will find him in the luncheon-room."

I made my way there. Seated at a table alone was Sir Norman Greyes, the man who had watched for my arrest, a few hours ago, in Woollerton Road, Brixton.

By SIR NORMAN GREYES.

I RESIGNED my position at Scotland Yard early in the autumn of 19—, for two reasons. First, as a protest against an act of gross injustice which, although it did not affect me personally, was still bitterly resented by the majority of my fellow-workers; and secondly because, through the unexpected death of a distant relative, I succeeded to a baronetcy and a sufficient income. I spent the best part of three years in travel, nearly half of which time I was in the United States. On my return to London I found myself, much against my will, hankering after my old profession. It was very clear to me that my old department had lost the mastery it had once attained over the criminal world. The problem of several cold-blooded murders and various large and daring robberies remained entirely unsolved. In the intervals of my country life I began to study these from an outsider's point of view, chiefly from the columns of the newspapers, but also to some extent from hints and information supplied to me by my friend Inspector Rimmington, who had been one of my colleagues in the old days and now held the post which I had vacated. Gradually I came to a certain conclusion, a conclusion which I kept largely to myself because I felt sure that no one at the Yard was likely to agree with me. I decided that the majority of these undetected crimes were due to one person, or rather to one gang of criminals presided over by one master mind. Purely from the inherited instinct of my long years of service in the Police Force, I set myself the task of hunting down this super-criminal. In November, 19—, I began to believe that I was on the right track.

There were three crimes which I became convinced had been committed by the same hand. The first was the great robbery of jewels from Messrs. Henson and Watts's establishment in Regent Street, and the murder of the watchman, who was shot dead at his post. No trace of even a single article of this jewellery had ever been discovered. The second crime was the robbery of a number of bearer bonds from a messenger in a railway carriage on the London, Chatham, and Dover line. The messenger was also shot, but recovered after six months' nursing, although he could never give any coherent account of what had happened to him. The bonds were disposed of in South America at a considerable loss. The third was the robbery from Lord Wenderley's house in Park Lane of a great collection of uncut jewels, and the serious wounding of Lord Wenderley himself, who was attacked in the dark and who neither saw nor heard anything of his assailant. There were other crimes which I thought might be connected with these, but these three, for various reasons, became linked together in my mind as the outcome of one man's brain. I set myself the task of discovering this one man, and the day came at last when I really believed that I was in a position to lay my hand upon him. There is no necessity to detail the whole train of circumstantial evidence which finally brought me to a certain conclusion. It is sufficient to say that after watching him for three weeks, I became convinced that a man of the name of Thomas Pugsley, carrying on business in Bermondsey as a leather agent, and living apparently the most respectable of lives at Brixton, was in some measure connected with these crimes. I discovered that his leather agency business was prosecuted without energy or attention, that his frequent absences from London were not in neighbourhoods where his wares could be pushed, and that he was often away for a month at a time, with his whereabouts unknown even to his landlady. The latter was a highly-respectable woman, at whose house he had lived for the last two years, and who, I honestly believe, was ignorant of her lodger's antecedents, his habits, and business. By taking rooms in the neighbourhood, I easily discovered all that she knew, and one or two circumstances which lent colour to my suspicions. I placed these before Rimmington, and it was decided to make an arrest.

A more clumsy piece of business than this intended arrest was never planned or carried into effect. The sergeant placed in charge of the affair by Rimmington, and his two subordinates, arrived at Brixton an hour later than the time fixed upon, accosted

Pugsley in the street, and were very soon made aware of the class of person with whom they had to deal. Before the sergeant could get out half-a-dozen words, he was lying on the pavement with a bullet through his shoulder. His companions dragged him on to the pavement and set him up against the railings. Then they turned to look for Pugsley. There was not a trace of him to be discovered anywhere. The amazing skill and cunning of the man was amply demonstrated on that morning. By some extraordinary means he seemed to disappear from the face of the earth. The books of his business, when examined, showed that he had done scarcely any business. His warehouseman was an honest but stupid fellow, who knew nothing except that his master took numerous trips, he thought abroad, to obtain fresh agencies. There was enough money in the bank to pay all liabilities, but so far as Thomas Pugsley himself was concerned, he seemed to have walked off the edge of the world.

The morning which witnessed, however, the shooting of the sergeant, and the remarkable disappearance of the man in whom I was so deeply interested, was memorable, so far as I was concerned, for another noteworthy incident. Absolutely disgusted with the result of my six months labours, I determined to wipe the whole thing from my memory, and travelled down to Woking with the intention of playing a round of golf. I was introduced by the secretary to a resident of the place whose name was James Stanfield,.and we had a round which ranks amongst the best I ever played in my life. Stanfield was a silent but by no means a gloomy person. He appeared to be about forty years of age and an absolute golf maniac. He played every shot with the most ridiculous care, but I must confess with also the most wonderful precision. He beat me at the seventeenth hole, and it was whilst we stood together upon the eighteenth tee that the incident happened which was to bring still more excitement into the day. On our right was a small plantation of shrubs, through which winded the path which my partner pointed out to me as leading to his house. Our attention was attracted by the continued barking of a small dog which had wandered from the adjacent footpath. I had the curiosity to walk a step or two into the plantation to see what was the trouble. My companion, however, who was a little on my left, was the first to discover the cause of the dog's excitement. At a little cry from him I hurried to his side. Stretched upon his back, with extended arms, and a small blue hole in his forehead, we found the body of a man. He was dead but still warm, and by an extraordinary chance I

Sir Norman Greyes.

at once recognized him. He was one of the two plain-clothes policemen whom I had seen in Woollerton Road that morning, foiled in his attempt to arrest the man who had been passing under the name of Thomas Pugsley.

By JANET SOALE.

JUST before midday on Thursday, the third of November, my master made one of his unexpected reappearances. I was not surprised. Only the night before I had dreamed of him, and it seemed to me impossible that with my passionate prayers going out day by day, he should stay away much longer. When I first saw him turn in at the gate, I was filled with wild excitement. If he could have seen me at that moment, he would have known and understood everything. By the time he had reached the front door, however, and I let him in, I had regained my self-control. I must have seemed to him just the ordinary, well-mannered, well-conducted parlourmaid.

He changed his clothes and went off presently for his round of golf. When I went to his room to brush and press the clothes which he had taken off, I found, however, that he had placed them in a drawer and apparently locked it. The discovery, coming on the top of many others, gave me food for thought. I resolved to watch the next morning's newspapers. It was becoming more and more clear to me that there was something in my master's

manner of life which he was anxious to conceal from the world. I was the more convinced of this when I saw that in the top drawer, which he had opened to take out a tie, he had concealed a small revolver, loaded in all six chambers. A merchant with offices in the City and a country cottage for golf, does not carry a loaded revolver about with him. My heart beat with excitement as I picked it up and handled it. I forgot my master's indifference. I ignored the fact that, although I am well enough to look upon, and that my face and figure have won me more admirers than I could count on the fingers of both hands, he has never cast a second glance in my direction. I still had faith in myself if I chose to make the first advances. I have never made them to any man, but I have an instinct. I believe that he is cold and unresponsive from habit. I believe that if I could make him understand the fires which are burning me up night and day, he would throw off this mask of coldness and mystery—he would give me that place in his life which I crave.

I WAS loitering about his room, looking still at that closed drawer, when to my amazement a man entered—a thin, weedy-looking person, with sunken cheeks and a straggling, sandy moustache. I am not easily frightened, but it gave me a turn when he closed the door behind him.

"What do you want?" I asked, sharply. "How dare you come up here?"

He looked at me earnestly. It was obvious that my first thought was a mistaken one. This was not one of the admirers whom I found it difficult sometimes to keep at arm's-length.

"Young woman," he said, "I am a police-officer. You seem to be a sensible girl. Answer the questions which I ask, do not obstruct me in the course of my duty, and you will be rewarded."

I looked at him in silence for several moments. I do not think that I changed colour or showed anything of the terror which sat in my heart. My master was in danger. All the time I stood there, I was thinking. How was I to help? How could I help?

"Your master returned here an hour or so ago," this man continued, "and has now gone off to play golf. I want the clothes which he wore when he came down."

"How do you know that he changed?" I asked.

"I saw him come in and I saw him go out," was the quiet reply. "This is his bedroom, is it not?"

"It is," I admitted.

"Then the clothes must be here. Where are they?"

"I do not know," I answered. "I was looking for them myself. I was just going into the bathroom next door to see if he had left them there."

He stepped back and entered the bathroom. He was only gone for a few seconds, but I found time to take the revolver from the tie drawer and to slip it into my loose pocket.

"The bath has not been used," he said, a little shortly, when he came back. "I should like you to stay with me whilst I search these drawers."

I raised no objection, and he made a hasty search of the contents of the first two. When he came to the bottom one and found it locked, he gave vent to a little exclamation.

"Have you the key of this drawer?" he demanded.

"No," I answered. "My master has taken it with him."

He made no bones for what he did, nor offered any apology. With an instrument which he carried in his pocket he forced the lock and bent over the contents of the drawer. He was a man addicted, I should imagine, to silence, but I heard him muttering to himself at what he found. When he stood up there was a smile of triumph upon his lips.

"What time do you expect your master back?" he inquired.

"I do not know," I answered. "He was lunching at the golf club and playing a round afterwards. About five o'clock, I should think."

He walked to the window and stood looking out over the links. I, too, looked out. In the far distance we could see two men playing.

"Do you know the links?" he asked.

"Very well," I told him. "I have lived here all my life."

"What hole are they playing now?"

"The seventh."

"What green is that just opposite?"

"The seventeenth."

"Where is the tee for the eighteenth?"

"Just out of sight underneath the trees."

He nodded, apparently well content. His eyes lingered upon me. I saw a look in his face to which I was perfectly well accustomed. He had discovered that in my quiet way I was good-looking. He came a little nearer to me.

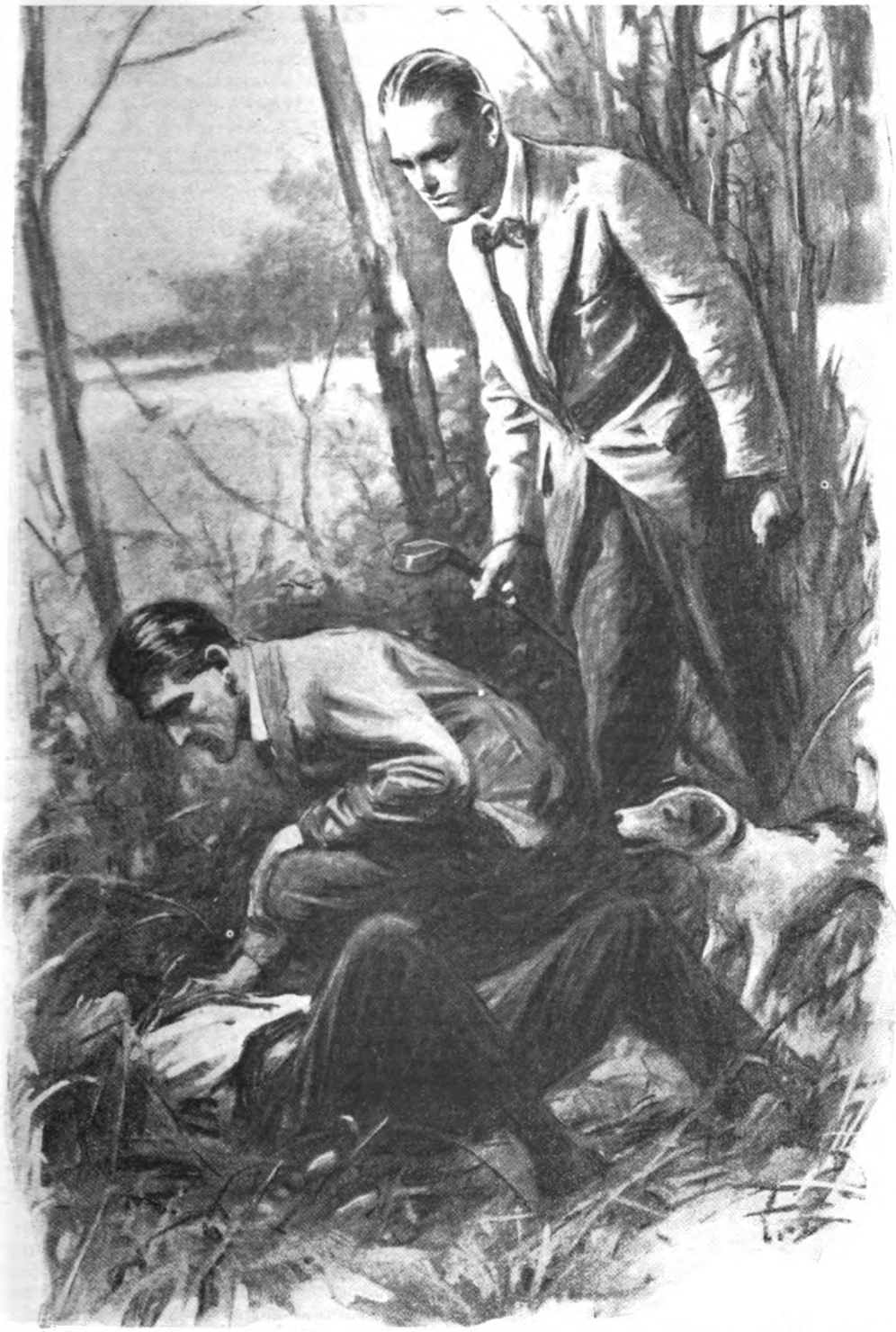
"Are you very fond of your master?" he asked.

"I see very little of him," I answered. "He gives no trouble."

"Do you know that you are rather a pretty girl?" he ventured, coming nearer still.

"I am always very careful of strangers who tell me so," I retorted, taking a step backwards.

He laughed.



"Stretched upon his back, with extended arms, and a small blue hole in his forehead, we found the body of a man."

" You'll give me just one kiss for this ? " he begged, holding out a pound note. " You're an intelligent girl, and you've told me just what I want to know."

I looked at him curiously. If it were true that I was an intelligent girl, it was scarcely a compliment which I could return. For a police-officer he must have been a hopeless idiot.

" I don't allow anyone to kiss me," I objected, pushing the pound note away.

" You must put up with it just for once," he insisted.

I scarcely believed that he was in earnest —and for the first time in my life a man kissed me upon the lips. I can find no words even now to describe the fury which was born in my heart against him. I feared even to speak, lest my passionate words might carry some warning to him of my hatred. He seemed perfectly indifferent, however, and in a few minutes he strolled out and made his way across the garden to the little spinney. I took up my master's field-glasses and satisfied myself that he was still a long distance away. I waited for a quarter of an hour. Then I took another path which led into the plantation, and made my way cautiously to where the man was standing with folded arms, leaning against a tree. I drew nearer and nearer. I am light-footed, and I have even been called stealthy. It was part of my early training as a parlour-maid to make no noise when I moved. So I stole to within a few yards of him, unperceived and unheard. I am not an emotional person, and my mind was quite made up as to what I meant to do. It was curious, however, how slight things left vivid memories with me during those few seconds. A bird was singing just overhead, and I remember that in those strained moments I found myself translating his song. He was singing because he was glad to be alive in this wood full of dying autumnal things. Very soon there would be company for the creeping and crawling insects to whom winter meant death. And afterwards ! I had a vivid little mind-picture of a crowded courthouse, of the judge who might try me, and the jury who might pronounce my fate. For a moment I shivered. Then I thought of that loathsome caress. I thought of my master, and I smiled. If he knew he would thank me. Some day he would know !

I was so close that I think my victim felt the breath from my lips or the sensation of my approaching body. He turned quickly around, and I saw his eyes wide-open with apprehension. He would have shrunk away, but he seemed paralyzed, and as he stood there I shot him through the forehead. He swayed on his feet, his mouth open like the mouth of an insane man. His eyes rolled, he pitched and fell forward on his face. I listened for a moment. Then I took the path back to the house. I had finished what I came out to do.

By MICHAEL.

MY round of golf with the man who was the declared hunter of my life and liberty afforded me no apprehension whatever, although I must confess that the first sight of Norman Greyes seated in the club luncheon-room, only an hour or so after he had witnessed the abortive attempt to arrest me, was something of a shock. I came to the conclusion, however, that his presence here was accidental, and in no way connected with that harmless and respectable inhabitant of the neighbourhood, James Stanfield. I played golf steadily and with success. It was not until that startling discovery close to the eighteenth tee that my equanimity was seriously disturbed. As we looked down upon the dead body of the plain-clothes policeman whom I had last seen in Woollerton Road, we both recognized him. No hint of anything of the sort, however, escaped from my lips.

After the first few seconds of stupefaction, Greyes naturally took charge of the affair. He set the caddies to search all around for a weapon, and begged me to summon my gardener, or anyone who might be of assistance. I called for Soale in vain, however, and remembering that he had asked leave to visit his brother at Mayford, I abandoned the quest. Subsequently, one of the men working on the course appeared, and we carried the body into my tool-shed. Greyes locked the door and telephoned for the police and doctor.

" You will excuse my apparent officiousness," he said, " but I once had some connection with Scotland Yard."

" There is nothing to excuse," I assured him. " I am only too thankful that you happened to be here. Do you think that it is a case of suicide ? "

" I have reasons for doubting it," he replied, " apart from which, if it were suicide the weapon would have been found. As the event happened so close to your house, and actually on your path, Mr. Stanfield, you will not mind, I am sure, if I ask your servants a few questions."

" I shall be only too pleased," I told him. " My staff is rather limited, as I am only here occasionally. My gardener is out for the afternoon, so there only remains my maid-servant."

I led the way into the house. Janet was busy in the kitchen, but came at once at our summons. As usual, she was wonderfully

neat, and her manner, although reserved, was perfectly open.

"We want to know," my companion asked, "whether there have been any callers at the house this afternoon?"

"None, sir," she replied, "except the boy with the chicken I ordered for the master's dinner."

"Have you seen anyone about the place?"

"No one, sir."

"Did you hear anything which might have been the report of a pistol?"

"Nothing at all, sir."

"Have you been outside the house yourself?"

The girl shook her head.

"I have had no occasion to go out, sir," she replied. "I have been busy in the kitchen."

Greyes nodded, and dismissed her after a few more unimportant questions. Soon a police-inspector arrived, and the doctor. I let them visit the scene of the crime alone. As soon as they had gone I went upstairs. I looked in my tie-drawer for the small revolver. It had vanished. I looked in the bottom drawer, which I had left locked, for the clothes which I had worn when I had made my escape. The drawer had been forced open, and they, too, had disappeared. Then I realized that I was faced with a problem. Someone had penetrated my defences. I had been—I probably still was—in danger. I went down to the study and summoned Janet once more to my presence. When she arrived I took a seat between her and the door. I made her face the window. Down in the straggling plantation the police-inspector was still talking to Greyes.

"Do you know anything about this affair which you did not tell Sir Norman Greyes?" I asked her.

"Yes, sir," she replied.

I looked at her thoughtfully. She was very straight and shapely in the grey twilight. Her eyes met mine without flinching. I have been an indifferent student of women's looks, but I realized then that they were a very beautiful, though rather a cruel colour—greeny-brown of a light shade, with delicate lashes and finely-cut eyebrows. There was a passionate curve to her lips which I had never before noticed. Her neatly-braided hair was brown and lustrous.

"You had better tell me everything, Janet," I enjoined.

"Soon after you had gone out," she said, "the man who lies in the outhouse came here and asked me questions about you. He made his way into your bedroom. He was anxious to see the clothes in which you had travelled down. He opened the bottom drawer of your wardrobe and found them."

Janet Soale.

"There was a revolver in the top drawer," I remarked.

"I had discovered that and hidden it," she replied.

"And after he had found my clothes?"

"He went down to the plantation to wait for you."

"Did he say what he wanted?"

"He had told me that he was an officer of the police."

"And then?"

"I went down the other path, and I made my way across the spongy turf to where he was standing. When I was so near that there was no chance of missing him, I shot him dead."

I am a man to whom courage is second nature, and I have seen death trifled with, and trifled with it myself, like the juggler with his ball, but I have never heard it spoken of with more indifference. Outside, the figures of the detective and his companion were still visible in the little wood.

The body of the dead man was only a few yards away. I leaned forward and I looked at the girl, striving to get past the almost cynical impenetrability of her speech.

"Why did you do this, Janet?" I asked.

"He did what no man in the world has ever dared to do before, sir," she replied. "He kissed me—upon the lips! I wonder that I did not kill him where he stood!"

"Had you no other reason except this, Janet?" I persisted.

"I wished to save you, sir," she answered.

"To save me from what?"

"From the Law."

"You thought that I was in danger?"

"I know that you were."

"Who or what do you think I am?"

"A great criminal," she answered.

I was staggered, for it was plain to me now that I must have been at this girl's mercy many a time.

"I have always believed," she went on, slowly, "that you were leading a double life. The few visitors you have had have come at night, and secretly. Whenever you have arrived here and Mr. Stanfield has recommenced to play golf, there has been a tragedy or a great robbery in the newspapers on the following morning. I always felt that some day or other this would happen. Now that it has come, I am glad."

"You realize that you have killed a man in cold blood?" I persisted, determined to try her to the limit.

"I am glad that I have," she replied.

"For a domestic servant," I said, "you have a wonderful sense of your obligations."

"You need not scoff at me," she complained. "I am a woman—a dangerous woman, but a clever one. I was not brought up to be a servant. I am fit to be your companion. That is my hope."

"I have never trusted a woman in my life," I told her.

"You will trust me," she declared, in a low tone. "You will remember what I have done for you to-day. I am the woman who was made to complete your life. You had better realize it and make use of me. You will not regret it."

She came a little closer to me, and though women have never been more than the toys of my idle moments, I felt the passion of her strike into my heart. My senses were aflame. I saw life differently. Her voice became softer and more sibilant. She was like some beautiful animal. Her eyes were appealing but inhuman.

"You shall marry me," she continued. "I have a fancy about that, and I insist. Then think of the benefit. If disaster should come, I shall never be able to give evidence against you. But there will be no disaster. I know how clever you are. I, too, have brains. My master, say that this means something to you. I have given you proof of my devotion. Repay me."

I took her into my arms. There was a savage fire about her lips which warmed my blood, a fierce delight in her strange-coloured eyes which amazed whilst it enthralled me. This modern Borgia seemed to have fastened herself on to my life. The figures of the men in the little wood grew more shadowy.

"Where is the pistol?" I whispered, holding her away from me for a moment.

"Where no one will ever find it," she answered.

"And the clothes?"

"Burned. I run no risks when your safety is in question."

The searchers came back to the house half an hour or so later. I was busy rebinding the handle of my putter. Janet was in the kitchen preparing my dinner. Greyes accepted a whisky-and-soda. He looked tired and a little dejected.

"Any luck?" I asked him, under my breath, as he prepared to take his leave.

He shook his head.

"So far as circumstantial evidence is concerned," he admitted, "I am afraid we shall be in a bad way. A more brutal murder I never remember. A young man, too, with a wife and three or four children, simply out to do his duty. If——"

He stopped short, swallowed a little sob in his throat, and turned away.

"I hope that you will give me another game of golf some day, Mr. Stanfield," he said, as he prepared to take his leave.

"With great pleasure," I assented.

By SIR NORMAN GREYES.

YESTERDAY the inquest on poor Richard Ladbrooke, after having been twice adjourned, resulted in a verdict of "Murder against some person or persons unknown." The verdict itself is a terrible reflection upon our present criminal methods. It pulls at the strings of my conscience with sickening intensity. Ladbrooke had found a clue which he confided to no one. He had travelled down to Woking in search of the missing man Pugsley—or Michael Sayers, as I believe him to have been. He must have been murdered there either by Pugsley himself or some confederate, yet not one of us has been able to lay our hands upon a single shred of evidence. I have been unable to tear myself away from the place. I have had several games of golf with Mr. Stanfield, and I have dined with him once at his house—a very excellent dinner, and wonderfully cooked. He is desirous of

"'You need not scoff at me,' she complained. 'I was not brought up to be a servant. I am fit to be your companion.'"

offering a small reward for the apprehension of the murderer, but at present I have not encouraged him. I do not want a crowd of people stirring up the waters. I have not said as much to anyone—not even to him—but I am making it the object of my life to lay my hands upon the so-called Thomas Pugsley. The day I find him the mystery of Ladbrooke's murder will be solved. And I shall find him!

(*Next month: "The Kiss of Judas."*)

WINTER-SLEEPERS

by
J. ARTHUR THOMSON,
M.A., LL.D.,
Regius Professor of Natural History in the University of Aberdeen.

TO many different kinds of animals winter has been a long-standing problem, and it is interesting to study the many solutions that have been offered with varying degrees of success. The problem is how to meet a season of cold and storms, how to face scarcity of food, and often a snow-covered ground. One of the neatest solutions is that of the migratory birds who circumvent the winter by journeying to more hospitable shores. But the adventure of migrating to winter quarters is often very costly, especially when the travellers are overtaken by bad weather. Another solution is to lay up stores, an expedient that reaches its finest expression in ants and honey-bees and squirrels. Some other animals, like wolves, are spurred by winter to more intense hunting. Others again, like ermine and mountain hare, put on white fur instead of brown fur in the winter, which in snowy regions makes them less conspicuous in attack or in retreat, and is also the dress that keeps the body warmest in very cold weather. Now these are some of the answers-back which different kinds of animals have "learned" to make to the thrusts and arrows of the winter. Such an answer-back as changing the colour of the fur was not arrived at in the same way as the quickening of the pace in the wolf-pack, or the making of stores among the squirrels, but all the answers have been in a certain sense "learned," and are now engrained in the constitution—often, of course, with the possibility of con-

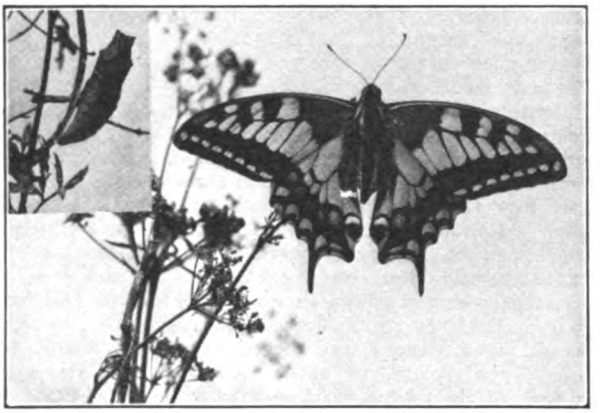
Cluster of Garden Snails in winter quarters at base of brick wall.

tinued improvement from generation to generation.

But besides the solutions we have mentioned—all facing the problem of meeting the winter—there is another and one of the most effective—namely, winter-sleep or hibernation, such as we see in bats and hedgehog, in marmot and dormouse.

WINTER LETHARGY AND TRUE HIBERNATION.

The ways of animals and the ways of men are often on parallel lines. People who "go abroad for the winter" are like the migratory birds; thrifty housewives who accumulate stores of eggs and jam are like squirrels and beavers; the man who puts on a fur coat is like many a mammal that gets thicker and longer hair in the winter; and there are many other analogies. But it is not possible to find among mankind anything quite parallel to hibernation among mammals. The nearest approach is perhaps to be found among some poor people of Siberia, who are said to doze for weeks on end in houses almost hermetically sealed, where the heavy and partly poisonous air must help to keep them sleepy and unappetized. Some years ago in the Lewes the cow used to be brought in winter right into the crofter's "black house," partly for the sake of the warmth and shelter, but partly because in the warmth she could do with less food. She was sometimes so weak at the end of winter that she had to be lifted out to the young grass. But our point is that true hibernation is an answer-back which only a few animals, like hedgehog and hamster, have been able to give; and that man shows nothing of it. What, then,



The Swallow-tail Butterfly spends the winter as a pupa attached to a stem (see inset photograph). The pupa has some resemblance to a seed-pod.

Photo: J. J. Ward.

Queen Hornets resting during the winter in the shelter of an old tree.

Queen Wasp seeking in an old tree for a resting-place for the winter. She holds to a bit of bark with her mandibles and lies dormant from October to early May.

Photo: J. J. Ward.

is true hibernation ? If we remove some of the stones in an old wall during the winter we may find in a snug corner a cluster of a dozen snails. The mouth of the shell has been sealed up with a lid of hardened slime and lime. The heart beats very slowly ; there is very little breathing ; the weight slowly decreases as the winter goes on ; and some of the organs of the body are badly out of condition. This illustrates what might be called *winter-lethargy*—a sinking down into a state of quiescence, almost of suspended animation. Sometimes the heart of a garden snail beats only four times a minute, instead of forty, when the outside temperature is near the freezing-point. What happens is that the snail suspends operations. Its income apart from the reserves stored in its body is *nil* ; to meet that very unpleasant state of affairs it reduces its expenditure to almost *nil*. It is hardly what one can call a *modus vivendi* (a way of living) ; but it is a way of not dying. And that is always something. The same kind of lethargy is to be seen in the chrysalids of moths and butterflies, which often remain hidden away and quiescent through the winter months, in many ways like the seeds of plants. But it must be remembered that inside the envelope of the chrysalis a great change is in slow progress, stopping, if it is too cold, the change from the cate pillar to the winged butterfly or moth. Many insects pass the winter in this apparently quiescent state, and the lying low saves the life. But it is not true hibernation.

The full-grown frog feeds on insects and grubs, on earthworms and slugs ; but these are not readily available in the winter. So the frog snuggles into a hole in a bank, or up a disused drain-pipe, or even into the mud, and sinks into a winter torpor. There it lies, mouth shut, eyes shut, nostrils shut, breathing through the skin, with the heart beating very feebly. Its income is nothing ; its expenditure is next to nothing. By lying low it survives the hard times of winter. And so it is with tortoises and terrapins, that bury themselves in the ground or in the mud under water, and lie quiet all the winter through. In some kinds of tortoises the winter torpor does not set in if they are living in artificially - heated conditions, and it is of some interest to notice that this disturbance of the natural rhythm sometimes upsets the constitution in rather subtle ways. The temperature of frogs and toads and tortoises in their winter torpor may sink to near the freezing-point, and in some cases the body becomes quite stiff. If the heart should be actually frozen they die, but frogs have been known to recover from a period of imprisonment in a mass of ice in the pond. Fishes, amphibians, and reptiles are " cold-blooded " animals, tending to take on the temperature of the surrounding world, and perhaps it is clearer to speak of their winter quie cence as lethargy or torpor, keeping the word hibernation for sundry mammals, to which we must now turn.

Common Lizards in their winter rest.

HIBERNATING MAMMALS.

Birds and mammals have a monopoly of warm-bloodedness. That is to say, they are able to keep up an almost constant body-temperature, day and night, year in, year out. The precious animal heat which makes the work of the living laboratory easier is chiefly produced by the muscles. It is lost by radiation into the outer world, in spite of the non-conducting robes of fur and feathers, and it is also lost in some other ways—in the hot breath of both birds and mammals, and in the sweating of mammals. If too much is being lost, more must be produced, or the loss must be cut down. If too much is being produced, more must be got rid of—*e.g.*, in perspiration, or the over-production must be checked. It is this regulation of the supply and loss of heat that makes a bird or a mammal " warm-blooded." The centre for the regulation is in the medulla oblongata of the brain. How the regulation is effected is too difficult a question to be tackled here.

Very young birds are imperfectly warm-blooded, and everyone knows how soon the nestlings die of exposure if the parents are killed. They are cold-blooded like frogs and reptiles ; they have not got their regulative arrangements in order yet ; their temperature goes down and down, and they die.

In the same way it is interesting to find that the three old-fashioned egg-laying mammals of Australia and New Guinea, the two spiny ant-eaters and the duckmole, are imperfectly warm-blooded, especially the ant-eaters. The temperature of the spiny ant-

Fig. 1. The Long-eared Bat seen from behind while fixing itself upside down on a branch.

Fig. 2. Long-eared Bat folding up its long ears.

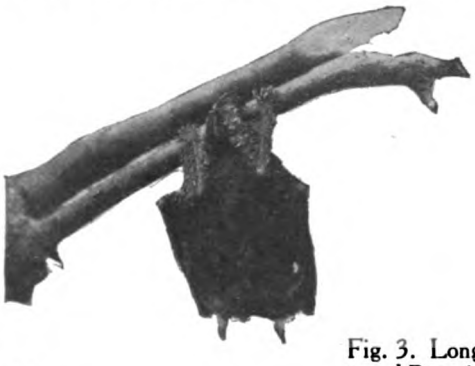


Fig. 3. Long-eared Bat with ears folded under its "wings" or arms.

Fig. 4. Long-eared Bat, showing resting and hibernating attitude.

Photos: J. J. Ward.

eater's body rises rapidly if the animal is teased. The normal temperature is 29·8° centigrade; it can be made to vary ten degrees by altering the outside temperature. Now the spiny ant-eater is a hibernator, and this is the clue we have been seeking.

The clue is that winter-sleeping mammals are imperfectly warm-blooded. When the cold weather sets in it becomes difficult for them to adjust the debtor and creditor account as regards heat, and they give up the attempt. They sink back into a state of comparative coldness and cold-bloodedness, sinking back to a condition like that of the nestling bird, or sinking back to an ancestral reptilian condition. For mammals evolved from reptiles. Thus winter-sleep is a kind of relapse; the animal slips down the rungs of the ladder of evolution—towards cold-bloodedness.

The words warm-blooded and cold-blooded are unfortunate, for they do not quite mean what they say. A snake basking on the sand of the desert is not cold, but it is cold-blooded (*poikilothermal*), which means approximating to the temperature of the surroundings. You may have felt very cold before you bought this Christmas Number of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, but your body-temperature was just the same as when you bought the Summer Number, you remember. For warm-blooded (*stenothermal*) means keeping an approximately constant temperature.

MAKING A STRENGTH OUT OF A WEAKNESS.

Life is insurgent, and it is a way of animals to make the best of a bad business. So we find that the occasional imperfection in the temperature-regulating arrangements in certain mammals has been counteracted very successfully. The hedgehog or hamster, or whatever it be, creeps into a confined space, some snug corner, and sinks into coma. If it fell asleep in the open, its temperature would go down and down, until it went too far to rise again. The winter-sleeper would die. But in the hole of the old tree, in the recesses of the hedgerow, with curtains of herbage round about, in the corner of the barn, the tem-

perature is much higher than that of the world outside, and an approximation of the sleeper's temperature to that of its immediate surroundings is not fatal. Along with the snuggling into a confined space must be taken the reduction of activity, and here hibernation approaches the lethargy of frog and tortoise. The heart beats feebly, the breathing movements are scarcely perceptible, the excretion or filtering stops, and this reduction of expenditure helps to save the situation.

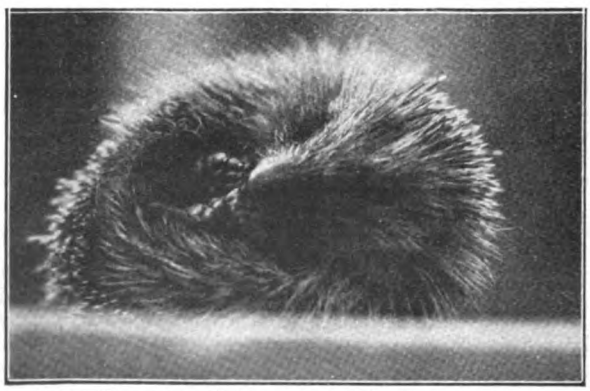
THE BIOLOGY OF WINTER SLEEP.

To understand something of this winter-sleep of bats and hedgehogs, marmots and dormice, we must keep in mind (1) the constitutional disability or weakness, namely, imperfect warm-bloodedness; (2) the creeping into a restricted space which gets warmed up a little; and (3) the great reduction of expenditure, for even the internal activities of the body come almost to rest—like a fire so well banked-up in its own ashes that we can hardly say more than that it is "in," not "out." But there are two other considerations. We must not think of the hedgehog facing its first winter, finding it hopeless to try to keep up its temperature, and then deciding to creep into a hole. The individual hedgehog, born in 1921, is at the present moment sleeping through the winter. But we misunderstand the situation unless we recognize that the hedgehog of 1921 inherited a constitution with a certain rhythm, established in the course of thousands of generations, and likewise an instinct to hide itself in a comfortable corner when the weariness or sleepiness comes on. For ages, it must be remembered, our hedgehogs have not known any winter. They have slept through them all, just as the migratory birds have circumvented them all.

The other consideration is that although the rhythm has been established (some sleepers go to sleep before the cold weather begins, *e.g.* the woodchucks of the Adirondacks), and although the instinct to seek a cosy corner has been engrained, there are various contributory influences. (*a*) After the hard work of summer there is fatigue and a physiological bias towards rest. (*b*) After the abundant meals of summer and the storage of reserves that has been effected, there is a natural see-saw towards rest. (*c*) Once the quiescence has begun, it will tend to continue, for the closeness of the retreat must be soporific, and the cessation of kidney-functions, that is to say, the filtering out of poisonous waste-products will tend to keep the sleepers sleepy. No doubt there comes about a sort of "auto-intoxication"—a poisoning of the body with its own waste-products. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why plants do not walk about; they are kept slumbrous by the retention of their own ashes.

Our general proposition is that true hibernation is confined to a small number of mammals, such as bats, hedgehogs, hamsters, dormice, marmots, spiny ant-eaters. It is exceptional and it is indicative of a certain weakness—a relapse towards a reptilian constitution. But out of weakness the winter-sleepers have made strength. Their motto is not merely Lie low and say nuffin," but "*Reculer pour mieux sauter.*"

It is not exactly that they make a virtue out of necessity; they adjust themselves to a weakness, so that it becomes a source of strength. "There is no more food for us, especially for us insect-eaters; the ground is covered with snow; these winds and hail-storms are terrible; there is no keeping warm these days; as regards thermodynamics we are insolvent; let us seek out a quiet corner and sleep off our very satisfactory summer." It is rather feeble-kneed, perhaps, but the disability was there, and our point is that an unconscious recognition of the constitutional weakness was followed by a seeking out of a resting-place, and that the lying-low is biologically justified, not merely because the winter-sleepers remain alive, but because, like the humble-bees at a much lower level, they are much the better of their long rest. *Reculer pour mieux sauter.*



Attitude adopted by the Hedgehog during its hibernating period. [*Photo:* J. J. Ward.

THE BATS IN THE HOLLOW TREE.

Colonies of bats often take possession of caves, hollow trees, church steeples, the rafters of barns and attics, and in cold regions they hibernate. Never were there quainter sleepers, for they huddle together, hanging themselves up by their toes, and folding themselves up in their arms. In one

attic in North America over one thousand five hundred bats were counted, and some caves are tenanted by many thousands. Those that hibernate vary considerably in the soundness of their winter-sleep, for many wake up when there is a spell of mild weather, with a chance of some midges and moths. After enjoying hunting for a few evenings the bats return to their slumbers. Where hibernation of bats is the rule, as in Britain, there is very marked plumpness at the beginning of winter, when they fall asleep: we know from the biochemist that sugary material is changed, sometimes in large quantities, into fat; these reserves of fat are consumed during the long fast of winter, so that they are very lean when they reawaken in spring. It is interesting to remember that some bats have discovered the characteristic bird solution of the problem of meeting the winter, for they migrate to more hospitable winter-quarters. If we ask why many bats hibernate while their distant relatives the moles do not, the answer must be (1) that bats are imperfect in their warm-bloodedness; (2) that all the small bats feed on insects which are scarce in the winter in colder countries; and (3) that bats do not lay up stores.

Alpine Marmots hibernating in company.

THE DEEP SLEEP OF THE HEDGEHOG.

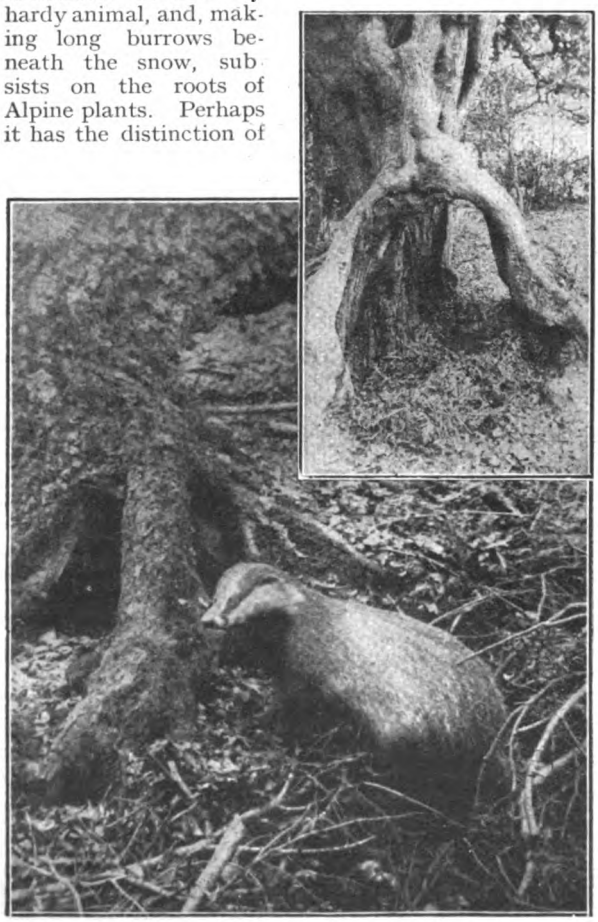
A good example of one of the deep sleepers is the hedgehog. When the weather becomes wintry, when there is scarcity of the insects, slugs, and earthworms on which it feeds, the hedgehog creeps into a nest prepared in the recesses of a thick-set hedge or in the base of a hollow tree. Its sleeping-chamber is surrounded by grass and leaves and other non-conducting material, sometimes including wool, so that the temperature is much higher than that of the outer world. If an accident should occur, letting the cold into the winter-quarters, the chances are that the sleeper may die without awaking. Sometimes, however, very keen frost awakens a hibernating mammal, which shows that it is not exactly the cold that causes the winter-sleep. The hibernating hedgehog does not usually stir for months; the heart beats feebly and the breathing movements are few; the inactive muscles produce just enough animal heat to keep life agoing; the stores of brownish fat accumulated in summer are slowly consumed; there are no waste-products except carbonic acid gas; the ordinary power of answering back to outside provocation is almost gone. The hedgehog approaches the confines of death, and it may be taken as a good illustration of the fact that winter-sleep is a state very different from ordinary sleep. It would be pedantic not to call hibernation by the simple name of "winter-sleep," but we have to face the difficult saying of one of the old investigators, that hibernation is not sleep and that it has nothing to do with winter. By the first statement he meant that, physiologically considered, hibernation is very different from ordinary sleep, for instance in the greatly reduced activity of heart and lungs, and in the stoppage of the kidney's filterings. By the second statement he meant that it depends on an old-established bodily bias, to which the cold of winter is only a trigger-puller. The fact is that hibernation, or winter-sleep, of, say, the hedgehog, cannot be distinguished from the æstivation, or summer-sleep, of the tenrec of Madagascar.

If we ask why the hedgehog must hibernate, when the mole, which belongs to the same order (Insectivora), remains wide-awake, the answer must be (1) that the hedgehog has some imperfection in the internal arrangements which normally ensure warm-bloodedness; (2) that the hedgehog's ordinary food becomes scarce as winter approaches; and (3) that the hedgehog is not a burrower. Moreover, the mole makes caches of decapitated earthworms.

THE MARMOTS ON THE MOUNTAINS.

Travellers in Switzerland sometimes see the elusive marmot high up on the Alps, but oftener they only hear the shrill whistle. The marmot is a gregarious, greyish-brown rodent about the size of a rabbit, a great burrower, living largely on the roots of Alpine plants. In its burrows it stores dried grass and the like, and this store points to the fact that there is a period of falling asleep during which some food may be taken. When the door of the burrow is shut, and the marmots have fallen sound asleep, sometimes

two dozen together, the food-canal is always empty apart from a little fluid, and the breathing movements sink to 2–6 per minute instead of the 50–60 of the summer. The woodchuck of North America is a marmot, less gregarious than the European species, and the name "woodchuck day" is applied to the date of its spring re-appearance after the long rest of winter. It is interesting to contrast the hibernating marmot of the Alps with the little snow mouse, a relic of the European fauna of the Great Ice Ages. Just as the reindeer, the Arctic fox, and the banded lemming, which used to be companions of the snow mouse on the low grounds of Central Europe, found safety, so far as they were not exterminated, by trekking to the North, so the snow mouse found safety by going up to the mountain-tops. It does not migrate in winter, it does not change colour, it stores only a little, and it does not hibernate. It is a very hardy animal, and, making long burrows beneath the snow, subsists on the roots of Alpine plants. Perhaps it has the distinction of living more dangerously than any other living mammal.



The Badger, which is not a true winter-sleeper, collects a quantity of bracken under an old tree and uses it for making a comfortable den.

THE LIGHTLY-SLEEPING DORMOUSE.

The dormouse might almost be called the squirrel of the thickets, for it climbs on bushes as its distant relative on trees, it is equally fond of nuts, it holds the food to its mouth in its paws, it has a long hairy tail. It is unlike the squirrel in being nocturnal in its habits. As the winter draws near the dormouse makes a store of food and a snug globular nest of grass and moss and leaves. It curls up into a ball (the usual surface-reducing attitude of a winter-sleeper) and sinks into hibernation. But it is one of the light sleepers, waking up in mild weather and eating temperately from the stores in its cupboard. The probability is that uninterrupted hibernation is more advantageous than what is seen in the light sleepers, for if the hibernator wakes up it requires some food. Thus there must be a store, as in the dormouse, or the possibility of hawking, as in the case of bats. In this connection it may be mentioned that if a deeply-sleeping hibernator is artificially and suddenly wakened the result seems to be very injurious. It disturbs the course of the natural rhythm, and the jar to the constitution may be fatal. In natural conditions the re-awakening is gradual; but we are reminded by the case of the dormouse that the restoration of the normal body-temperature may come about very rapidly after the sleeper is quite awake. Thus Dr. Pembrey found that a dormouse raised its temperature from 13·5° C. to 35·75° C. in an hour. What a feverish hurry that was—outdone, however, by a bat which rose from 11·25° C. to 33·5° C. in fourteen seconds!

THE STORES OF THE HAMSTER.

The hamsters are Old World yellowish-brown rodents, rather like stoutly-built rats, but with large cheek-pouches. The common European hamster, which does not occur in Britain, is about ten inches long, with a hairy tapering tail about two inches more. It is fond of making burrows in corn fields, with interlacing cross-roads and occasional enlarged chambers. It is mainly vegetarian and often does great damage to crops. Apart from this the hamster is a rather attractive animal, verging towards the belligerent. If it has a

short temper, as some observers say, it has also a long courage.

What gives a particular interest to the hamster is its habit of laying up huge stores in the deep winter-burrows. The stores consist of corn and hay, peas and beans, and other seeds; and they seem to be an adaptation to a very early awakening in spring, before there is much available vegetation. It is said that the hamsters keep their door shut for a long time in the very early spring, and that is the time when they feed on their stores.

OTHER HIBERNATORS.

Besides bat and hedgehog, dormouse and hamster, which we have chosen as good types of winter-sleepers, there are others, such as the spiny ant-eater (*Echidna*) of Australia, the jerboa of the Kirghiz steppes, and the sousliks (*Spermophilus*) of North Temperate countries, which link marmots to squirrels. There can be little doubt that the list of true winter-sleepers is much shorter than is frequently stated, for a long sleep in very cold weather is not the same as genuine hibernation. There is no warrant for putting Polar bear or brown bear on the list, and we doubt very much if any carnivore is a true hibernator. Ordinary squirrels should also be excluded from the list, and moles, of course. It is worth noting that bats are of ancient pedigree, that rodents and insectivores are two primitive orders of mammals, and that the egg-laying spiny ant-eaters are very old-fashioned. It seems then that the occurrence of winter-sleep is practically confined to the more primitive mammals, which is in accordance with the theory—the keynote of our study—that the imperfect warm-bloodedness of hibernators is a sort of relapse from the high estate of ordinary mammals. In the case of the spiny ant-eater, which has many reptilian features, it seems possible to think of a *persistence* of reptilian cold-bloodedness; in the other cases, like bat and hedgehog, the probability is rather that the winter-sleepers have gone back on what their ancestors had attained. One would like to know more about the warm-bloodedness of the baby-hibernators and how they compare with ordinary mammalian babies.

The Common Squirrel in its light winter-sleep, not a true hibernation.

THE GIST OF THE MATTER.

Does not this story of hibernation bring some big ideas into focus? (1) Life is rhythmic and it is punctuated by the seasons. Just as we fall asleep after the fatigue of the day, even if the room is not dark, so the winter-sleepers sink into a deep somnolence after the strenuous industry of the summer, and do so even if it be not very cold. But just as the darkness helps us to sleep, so the approach of winter is the signal for hibernation.

(2) Winter, with its cold and storms and scarcity, sets a problem to animals, and hibernation is one of the many answers that work fairly well. But it is a remarkable answer, since the hibernators are handicapped by an imperfect warm-bloodedness, which they nevertheless use as a way out of the difficulty. Out of weakness they are made strong, and they are not alone in that.

(3) As we have seen, it is interesting to think of the imperfect warm-bloodedness which characterizes winter-sleepers as a sort of relapse to a primitive, indeed reptilian, condition. For the hand of the past is ever upon the present, and a living creature is always in danger of slipping down the rungs of the steep ladder of evolution.

(4) Finally, the hibernation is not only a way of evading the difficulty of the winter, it is an opportunity for a long rest, which even the food-canal may be the better of. We wonder if it is not also an opportunity for processes of recuperation or rejuvenescence to stave off the processes of ageing or senescence.

The DEAR LIAR

by EDGAR WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY NORAH SCHLEGEL

SYLVIA CREST walked back to her surgery, her quick steps beating time to the song of triumph in her heart. She had declined Jonas Picton's offer to send her home in one of his many cars. Walking, movement of any kind, physical action she wanted, to work down the bubbling exuberance which was within her. People who knew her, and who observed the lifted chin and the light in her eyes, saw Tollford's one woman doctor as a new being.

They saw, though this they could not know, merely the reaction from months of depression bordering upon despair, months of waiting when her most precious quality, her faith in herself and her invincibility, had been gradually shrinking until she had almost lost hold.

For she had thrown down the gage to the town of Tollford, and until that morning the glove lay mouldering where it fell.

If Tollford had not been founded a couple of hundred years before the birth of Jonas Picton it might, and undoubtedly would, have been known to history as Pictonville. It is on record that Jonas offered pretty substantial inducements, including the building of a new town-hall, the presentation of a town park, and the equipment of a new fire-station, to induce such a change of name, but Tollford was more conservative in those days, before Picton's great glass-roofed factory buildings sprawled half-way down the valley. And when the Picton works and some eight thousand Picton *employés* had become so important a factor in the municipal life of Tollford, Jonas had outgrown the desire for advertisement, and found life held something bigger than the flattery of a purchased honour.

Dr. Sylvia Crest had come straight to Tollford from Mercers Hospital, her diploma painfully new but her heart charged with confidence. She had surveyed the land, and had duly noted the poverty of medical resources in the town. Of women doctors there were none—and there were at least four thousand women employed at Picton's. She sat down the night following her visit to Tollford and, with a pencil and paper and the local health statistics before her, she took stock of opportunity, and found the prospects beautiful.

So she arrived one dull day in February, rented a corner house, furnished her rooms with proper severity, put up her sign, and waited. The local newspaper man gave her a most outrageous puff, for Sylvia was pretty, the prettiness of regular features and a skin like silk, but brazen sign and as brazen advertisement notwithstanding, few patients sought the advice of the new doctor.

Tollford was conservative.

Moreover, working women did not like women doctors. About the female of the medical profession all manner of legends circulated. Women practitioners (by local and even more general account) did not treat women as kindly as men doctors. They were liable to fainting spells, and think what would happen if, in the middle of a critical operation, the doctor needed medical attention!

A haggard and droop-lipped Jonas Picton, sitting in his ornate office at the works, had heard of Dr. Sylvia Crest, and sighed. Where the great Steyne, most famous of

modern physicians, had failed to find any other remedy than the knife, and offered even that dread remedy without assurance of cure, what hope could a "bit of a girl" bring?

His secretary had pointed her out to him once when he was driving through Tollford. And yet, one day in sheer desperation, he had sent for her. The messenger had come at a moment when Dr. Sylvia was facing, perilously near tears, an accumulation of bills which called for an earlier settlement than her bank-manager could sanction. No wonder that the sun shone more wonderfully, and the homely folk of Tollford took on a foreign charm under her benignant eyes as she now made her way homeward.

ALAN BROCK was waiting in her study, and the hearth she had left clean and tidy was strewn with his cigarette-ends. She looked suspiciously at him as she came in: his face was more yellow, his appearance more untidy than usual, and he had not shaved. He was the one doctor in Tollford who had given her welcome—he was more presentable the first day he had called upon her—and she had been grateful. She did not realize until later that in seeking her out he had advertised his belief in her failure.

Alan Brock had neither friend nor practice in Tollford, and for good reason.

She took off her wrap, her disapproving eyes upon the figure sprawling in the one easy chair she possessed.

"Dr. Brock, you have been taking morphine again," she said, severely.

He chuckled, stretching out his hand to flick away the ashes of his cigarette.

"I must keep one patient, you know," he grinned. "To alleviate suffering, to restore vitality—what used old Professor Thingummy to say were the three duties of medicine?"

She smiled. She was too elated to take anything but a charitable view of one whose acquaintance she was determined to drop.

"Why don't you go away from here?" she asked. "You need not be a doctor——"

"The good people of Tollford make that obvious," he growled.

"You have money," she went on; "why stay here, where——" She stopped, and he looked up.

"Where I'm not exactly respected, eh?" he said. "Well, there are several reasons, and you're one of them."

"Me?" She was genuinely surprised.

He nodded.

"Yes, you. Do you know, Sylvia, doctoring isn't your line. You haven't the temperament for it, for one thing—it's a horrible profession for a woman, anyway."

Her lips were set tight now.

"That isn't the view you took a few months ago, Dr. Brock," she said, and he waved his hand feebly.

"A few months ago I wanted to know you, and I wasn't such a fool as to start right in telling you your faults. Sylvia, you and I are both hopeless failures."

He rose unsteadily and reached out his hand. Had she not moved quickly it would have rested on her arm.

"I want you to listen to me, Dr. Brock," she said, quietly. "There is nothing in our relationships which justifies your calling me by my Christian name. There is, I am sorry to say, very little in our common profession which makes a continuance of our friendship possible or desirable—even the communion of failure has no attraction for me."

He was standing by the table, swaying slightly. The effect of the morphine was beginning to wear off, and his face was drawn and haggard. He muttered something and sank back to his chair. Then, lifting his sunken head with an unexpected alertness:—

"Look here," he said, "I've got money, that's true. I tell you I'm mighty fond of you, and that's true also. Why don't you throw up this business and come away? It would make a new man of me, Sylvia."

She shook her head.

Supposing I was fond of you—which I'm not—marrying a man to reform him would be a pretty thin occupation; and, honestly, I don't think you're going to be cured."

"You're certain about that, are you?" he said, with an ugly little smile. "Do you realize," he asked, suddenly, "that you're certain about almost everything?"

He was surprised to see the red come into her face. Later he was to learn the reason why.

"I'm sorry," he said, humbly. "Don't let us quarrel—anyway, I'm leaving this hole. How did you get on this morning? Did you see the kid?"

"I saw the child," said the girl.

"Well?"

He was looking at her queerly. There was something sceptical and challenging in his attitude which annoyed her until she remembered that there had been a time when this broken man had been Picton's family doctor.

"I saw the child," she said, again, "and I think that the trouble is local—in fact, I am certain." She cut the word short, as though it had slipped out against her will, and again she flushed.

"You think the spinal trouble will yield to treatment; in fact, you're certain, eh?" he said, slowly. "Well, you're putting your opinion against the biggest expert."

"I realize that," she replied, "but I must say what I believe. I gave the child a thorough examination—she's a pretty little girl, isn't she? I am satisfied that with massage and fairly simple local remedies the swelling on the back can be absorbed."

Brock was silent. He sat with his chin on his hands, looking into the fire.

At last he broke the silence.

"And naturally old man Picton fell on your neck and blessed you?"

She looked at him in surprise.

"He *was* rather grateful. Why?"

"Because," said the other, grimly, "that's the kind of verdict he's been trying to get for years. Jonas Picton hates the knife. His wife died on the table. His mother died in similar circumstances, and I believe one of his sisters had a very unhappy experience at the hands of a fashionable surgeon. It is just the knife that he wants to avoid, and naturally he believed you, and was glad to swallow anything you told him. Do you know what you are, Sylvia? You're the straw—and he clutched you!"

The girl repressed her irritation with an effort.

"I gave what I believe to be an honest opinion," she said.

Dr. Brock had reached out his hand and taken a book from the bookcase, and was looking at it idly. He turned the cover.

"'S. A. C.'—your initials?" he said. "Sure And Certain, eh?" he laughed.

This time she made no attempt to conceal her anger.

"You are not quite as original as you think, Dr. Brock," she said, her lips trembling.

"Dr. Brock had taken a book from the bookcase. He turned the cover. 'S. A. C.—your initials?' he said. 'Sure And Certain, eh?'"

"Those initials have been interpreted that way before, by a man who would be a little more competent than you to sit in judgment on my diagnoses."

"Who is that?" he asked, in surprise.

He had reached the stage in morphia-mania where he found it impossible to take offence at rebuffs more pointed than Sylvia Crest's.

"John Wintermere," she said, shortly, and he whistled.

"I remember," said he, softly. "I heard some story about it from Mercers. He was rather sweet on you, wasn't he, and you had an awful row with him when you were a student, and——"

The girl had opened the door.

"If you will excuse me now, Dr. Brock, I shall be very glad to have this room," she said. "I am expecting some patients."

"Wintermere, eh?" he rose slowly, groping for his hat. "Good chap, Wintermere. He's married now, isn't he?"

He saw the girl's face go white.

"Married?" she faltered. "I don't know—perhaps—at any rate, it's no business of mine."

He chuckled. The effect of the marriage invented on the spur of the moment satisfied him.

"Perhaps he isn't—now I come to think of it I was wrong to say he was married. Scared you, didn't it?"

She made no answer.

He turned at the door of the little house.

"Jonas has taken you up, and you'll get all the patients you want now, but take my advice—combine business with pleasure by getting John Wintermere down to see Picton's kid. Picton has funked sending for him, though he knows Wintermere's opinion is the last word on spinal trouble——"

The door was slammed viciously in his face.

IT seemed almost as though Brock's prophecy was to be fulfilled, as if some secret courier had run from house to house telling Tollford that the new woman doctor was under the sublime patronage of Jonas Picton, and was no longer to be avoided. Patients appeared miraculously. Never before had Dr. Sylvia Crest's waiting-room been so crowded as it was that night.

She called the next day at the big house to see her little patient. Picton's car was at the door, and as she walked up the big man greeted her with almost pathetic eagerness.

"Just come into the library, Doctor," he said, opening a door. "I want to talk to you about Fay."

He ushered her into the room, closed the door behind her, and lowered his voice.

"I didn't tell you yesterday, Doctor, that I have consulted Dr. Steyne. You've heard of Steyne?"

"I have heard of him," she smiled, "and I also know that you've consulted him."

Picton looked relieved.

"I'm glad to hear that," he said. "Somehow, I didn't like telling you, for fear——" he laughed a little nervously—"for fear the knowledge that Steyne had seen her would influence your opinion. You know that he takes a different view to yourself? He calls the disease some infernal long name, and says that it cannot be cured save by an operation, and that it is extremely rare that such operations are successful. Sit down, won't you?

"There's another man—Wintermere," Picton went on. "You've heard of him?"

"I've heard of him," said Sylvia, steadily.

"Well, they wanted me to bring him down to see the child, and I've heard that he's a pretty clever man. I met him when I was on my vacation, and he seems a very clever fellow, though a bit young-looking for a specialist."

The name of John Wintermere invariably annoyed Sylvia. To-day, with the memory of Brock's sneer so fresh in her mind, there was sounder reason for her irritation. But John Wintermere had been her master in surgery, and common decency demanded a testimonial.

"I don't think I should be deceived by his youthful appearance, Mr. Picton," she said. "I think he is the greatest surgeon in this country."

Jonas Picton pulled a wry face.

"I don't want any great surgeons," he said, shortly. "I want a cure without surgery. And you think you can do it, don't you?"

Only for the fraction of a second did Sylvia hesitate.

"Yes, I think so. Yes, I am cer—I am confident I can cure the child," she said, and if he noticed her confusion of terms, he made no comment.

He rose quickly and gripped her arm.

"My friend," he said, and his voice was a little shaky, "put my girl right, and you shall never regret having come to Tollford."

Sylvia went up alone. In a large room, chosen for its situation because its windows offered no view of her father's commercial activities, was the centre and soul of Jonas Picton's existence.

"Hallo, Miss Doctor," said a cheery voice from the white bed, and Sylvia went across to her patient and took the thin hand in hers.

Fay Picton was seventeen, and a prodigious bookworm. Books covered the table by the side of the bed and filled two cases

which ran the length of the room. She was a pretty, fairylike thing, who turned big smiling eyes to the newcomer.

"You're the first interesting doctor I've had," she said, "and I've had a lot. Your name is Sylvia, and that's what I'm going to call you. I couldn't tell you this yesterday because Daddy was here, and I had to appear impressed by all that stuff you were talking."

"And weren't you impressed?" smiled Sylvia, as she sat by the bed.

"Not a dreadful lot," said the girl, with disconcerting frankness. "You see, I know much more about my unhappy case than you or Daddy. I've read a lot about it."

But Sylvia was nettled. To suggest the fallibility of the young is outrageous.

"You ought not to have read any medical books," she said, severely.

"Oh, skittles!" said the patient, contemptuously. "You don't suppose they'd let me have medical books, do you?"

"Well, where did you read about it?"

"In the encyclopædia, of course. Everything's in the encyclopædia, isn't it?"

Sylvia, for the first time in her life, was genuinely embarrassed.

"Well, anyway, we're going to cure you," she said, and Fay Picton laughed quietly.

"Of course you're *not* going to cure me," she said, calmly. "This thing is more or less incurable. The only remedy is an operation, and there have been just four cases where an operation has been successful. Only Daddy shrinks inside himself at the very idea—poor soul!"

This was not exactly the start which Dr. Sylvia Crest had expected. She was dismayed at the thought that her task was to be doubly difficult, and that she had two fights to wage—one against the disease and one against the scepticism of this self-possessed young person.

"You see, Doctor dear, the spine and all its eccentricities is *terra nova* to the poor doctor," the patient went on, remorselessly. She stopped suddenly as she saw the look in Sylvia's face. "I'm awfully sorry"—she put out her hand and laid it on Sylvia's knee—"anyway, it doesn't matter; do your best, and come every day and talk to me, and I'll pray hard for faith in your treatment."

That was the beginning of the curious and torturing friendship which shook the self-confidence of Sylvia Crest more than the admonitions of professors or the jeers of Alan Brock.

"Fay is quite brightening up under the care of the woman doctor," Picton told his cronies, his managers, and the few who enjoyed the privilege of intimate friendship with him. "Never saw her looking so cheerful, my boy."

ONE afternoon Sylvia went in haste to her patient, obeying an urgent telephone summons from the nurse, and found the girl lying on her side, haggard and white, with a queer little smile on her face.

"Doctor, darling," said Fay, "send that gaunt female out of hearing, and I'll tell you something."

Sylvia dismissed the nurse.

"Bend down as they do in books," whispered the girl, with a little laugh that ended in a grimace, "and I will tell you my guilty secret."

"What is wrong, dear?" asked Sylvia.

She was in a panic—an unreasonable, fearful panic—and there was need to exercise control lest her voice betrayed her. The girl's bright eyes were fixed on hers, and there was elfish laughter struggling with the pain in her voice.

"If we could have a little slow music," she whispered, "I think it would be appropriate. Sylvia, you won't let that raw-boned creature weep over me, will you?"

"For God's sake, Fay, be quiet," said Sylvia, hoarsely; "what are you talking about?"

"I'm going to glory," said the girl. "I sort of know it."

"Let me see."

Sylvia's hand trembled as she examined the spine. The tiny swelling which it had been her daily care to reduce had grown ominously, and there were other certain symptoms which could not be ignored.

Jonas Picton, called from a board meeting, listened in silence whilst Sylvia told him of the new development. He seemed to shrink visibly at the telling, and when he spoke his voice was husky.

"I—I have a lot of confidence in you, Doctor," he said; 'do you think—do you think there is anything to be done——?"

Sylvia was silent for a while. But he might have foretold her answer in the sudden stiffening of her body and the upward throw of her chin.

"I still have faith in my treatment," she said.

He did not speak again, but rose and went up to the girl's room.

Sylvia did not follow him. Somehow she knew instinctively that he wished to go alone. She waited for ten minutes and then he came back. He did not look at her, but walked to the window and stared out. Presently he turned.

"Who is the best surgeon in this country?" he asked.

"John Wintermere of Mercers Hospital," she replied.

He nodded and went out of the room. Then he came back and opened the door

wide, but he did not come into the room, nor did he look at her.

"You'd better go up and see Fay," he said. "I've telephoned to Dr. Wintermere and he will be here this evening."

Sylvia Crest walked heavily up the stairs. She had heard the doom of her professional career, as though it were pronounced by a judge.

"'Bend down as they do in books,' whispered the girl, 'and I will tell you my guilty secret.'"

Fay lay with her face turned toward the door, and as the girl entered she beckoned her.

"I had to do it, Sylvia darling," she said. "You don't mind me taking liberties with my staid old family doctor?"

She took the older girl's hand between hers and fondled it.

"Had to do what, dear?" asked Sylvia, quietly.

"I had to tell him to send for Wintermere."

"You told him?" said Sylvia, in surprise.

The girl nodded.

"You see, I've been thinking things out, and it occurred to me that I might be the fifth case in history, and really, for poor Daddy's sake, I ought to take the chance. You don't mind, do you, not really?"

Sylvia stooped and kissed the girl.

"No, dear," she said.

"It means a tremendous lot to you in your profession, doesn't it, I mean your—your——" Fay checked the words.

"My mistaken diagnosis," finished Sylvia, with a laugh. "Yes, I suppose it does, but it means more to me that you should have the best treatment, irrespective of my fine feelings, and even though the treatment is contrary to my idea of what is right."

Sylvia waited at the house the whole of that afternoon and she was alone in the drawing-room when John Wintermere came. She had nerved herself for the meeting and was, in consequence, more cold and more formal in her attitude than she intended.

He walked slowly across the room to her, and it seemed as though the passage of six years had made no alteration in the dis-

parity of their relationships. He was still the professor, she was still the student, though she felt she had grown older at a faster rate than he. But he was also the man who had held her hand one sunny day in the hospital gardens and had spoken incoherently of love, urging her to drop the profession to which she had dedicated her life. Perhaps the memory of this added to the awkwardness of the meeting.

"I'm glad to see you again, Sylvia," he said, in that soft voice of his. "It is curious I should be called in to a case of yours. Won't you tell me about it?"

She did not resent the "Sylvia." It came so naturally and rightly, and in the detailing of Fay Picton's case her nervousness wore off. He listened gravely, interjecting now and again a question, and when she had finished he heaved a long sigh.

"Well?" she challenged.

He hesitated.

"It may be what you think," he said, "but it seems to me that the symptoms suggest a series of complications. Have you——" he hesitated again, "have you offered a definite opinion?"

She nodded.

"Did you tell Picton that the case would yield to your treatment?"

She nodded again, and his face lengthened.

"So if the opinion I give is in contradiction to yours——?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

"If that is the case," she said, "I shall regret not having followed the advice you offered to me six years ago."

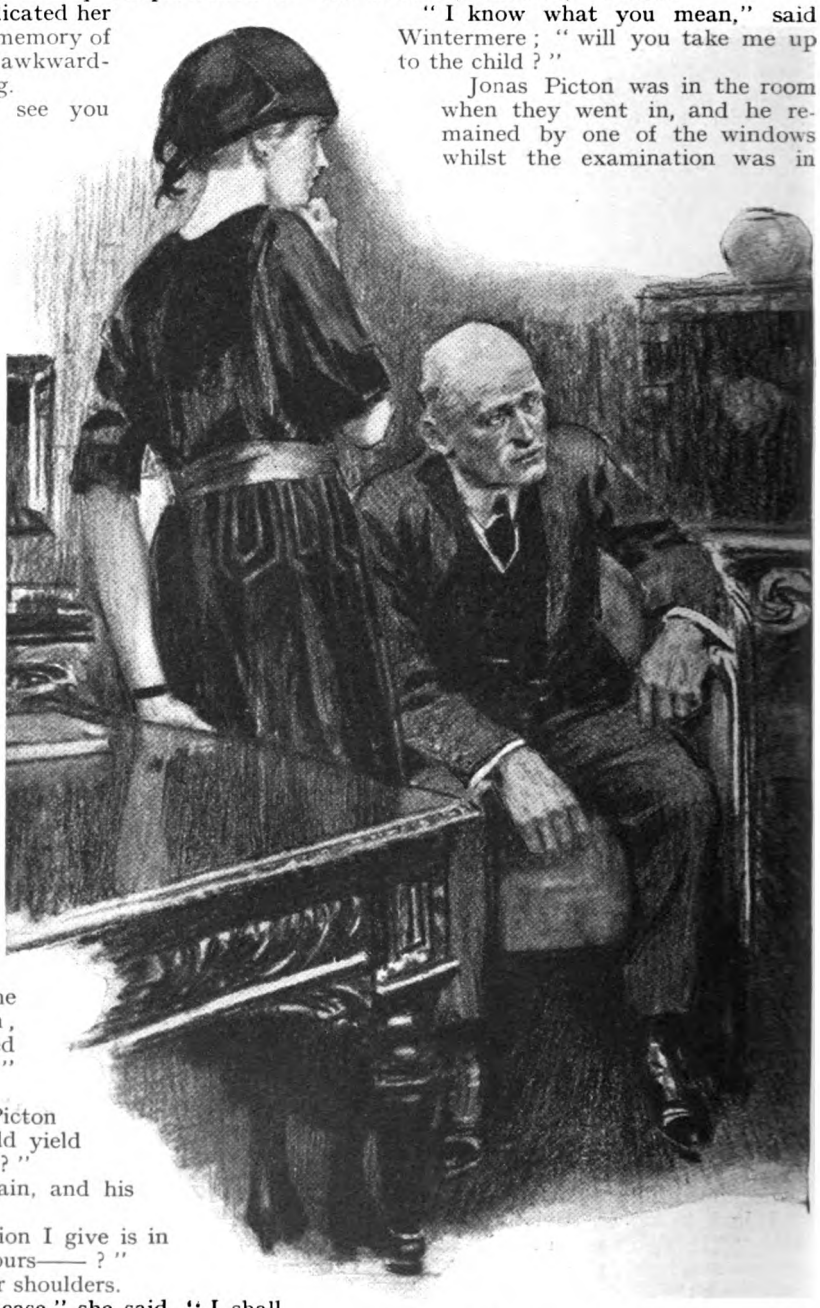
He was looking at her thoughtfully.

"It would mean ruin for you, of course," he said. "I—I wish I had not been called in."

"That's absurd, Dr. Wintermere," she said, sharply. "Personal friendship and that sort of thing—I don't mean friendship," she went on, confused, "I mean——"

"I know what you mean," said Wintermere; "will you take me up to the child?"

Jonas Picton was in the room when they went in, and he remained by one of the windows whilst the examination was in



"'I want to say this,' he said; 'that I discovered that it

progress. After a while Wintermere rearranged the bedclothes.

"Well?" said Fay, looking up into his face with a smile, "to be or not to be?"

He smiled back at her and gently twigged the end of her nose.

"That is the privilege of an eminent specialist," he said, gravely.

"To be or not to be?" persisted the girl.

'Fay, Fay, don't talk about such things." It was her father who had come to her bedside and had taken her little hand in his. "Don't talk about things so flippantly, darling. You hurt your old Dad."

Then with sudden resolution he looked across the bed to Wintermere, and asked, harshly:—

"Is an operation necessary?"

Sylvia held her breath. Her heart was pounding violently, and she felt as though she were going to faint. What would the verdict be? She knew too well what sentence would follow that verdict. She met the grave earnest eyes of John Wintermere and there was in hers a momentary plea for mercy. She hated herself for it. She knew that deep in her woman's heart was only one desire, the health and the life of the frail child who was looking with a quizzical smile from one to the other.

"Well?" asked Picton. "Is an operation necessary?"

Wintermere cleared his throat.

"An operation is not only necessary but imperative," he said, steadily, "and it must be performed at once."

Picton, with a groan, turned on his heel and walked from the room.

Sylvia saw the doctor only once again before the operation. At Fay's request she was staying in the house. Picton had retired to his library and was not visible, and the girl was left alone in the big cheerless drawing-room to plan her new future. She would have offered to help, had Wintermere given her any encouragement, but he had (purposely it seemed) made her attendance unnecessary by telephoning for an anæsthetist. So Sylvia sat and thought. She told herself a dozen times that every doctor makes a mistake, and the fact that their diagnoses were occasionally refuted does not ruin their career.

But it was not what the world might think of Sylvia Crest that worried her, that drove her to a condition of blank despair. It was the shattering of her own faith in Sylvia Crest.

At ten o'clock that night she went up to see the child and found her cheerful, even gay.

when the operation was well advanced was unnecessary.'"

"Sylvia, my duck, sit down here," said Fay Picton, patting the side of the bed with her white hand, "and don't worry because I'm going to be the miraculous fifth. I like your Dr. Wintermere."

"My Dr. Wintermere!" the protest was forced from Sylvia.

"Your Dr. Wintermere," said the girl, coolly. "He's awfully good-looking, isn't he, and not so very old. I should hate having a man with whiskers carving me about. And he's fond of you. I saw him looking at you as the film hero looks at the poor but honest shop-girl. He devoured you, that's the word, my dear."

"Don't talk nonsense, please, Fay. You ought to be preparing yourself——"

"For a happier life?" the patient laughed softly. "Now go down and see father, and tell him that I am brave but happy."

She had left the room and was at the head of the stairs when she met Wintermere. They stopped, facing one another, on the landing, and it was Sylvia who spoke first.

"I hope it is going to be very successful, Doctor," she said.

"I hope so," he replied drearily. "God knows, this is the most awful end to six years of dreaming that could be imagined. Anybody but you—if it had been anybody but you, Sylvia!"

She shook her head.

"If I am wrong, I am terribly wrong," she said. "If you are right I shall thank God for it all my days."

He bowed his head for a second and walked past her.

To Sylvia's surprise she found Picton waiting for her in the drawing-room. He was calmer and more friendly than she had expected. She delivered her message in a modified form, and he nodded and turned the conversation to a more general subject. So they talked for half an hour on matters which did not interest them, and their hearts and minds were in the room above.

Unexpectedly the old man turned the conversation to Sylvia herself.

"Doctor," he said, "I know you did your best for my little girl, and you've done all you could to make her happy—and to make me happy too," he added; then paused as though he was in some doubt as to how he should proceed. "What I mean is this," he said, with an effort. "That whatever is the outcome of this——" he waved his hand to the door, "I do not blame you."

"I shall not need your blame," said Sylvia in a low tone. "If I am wrong, I shall never practise again."

"You'll never practise again?" he repeated. "Then this is a tragedy for both of us."

She bent her head. The handle of the door turned and both sprang up as John Wintermere came in. He wore a long white wrapper and had evidently come straight from his task. His face was white and drawn and he looked from one to the other in silence as he closed the door behind him. Picton was shaking in every limb.

"Well—well——?" he asked, in a curiously squeaky voice.

John Wintermere nodded.

"Your daughter will recover," he said, "and I believe will be a strong and healthy girl."

"Thank God for that," gasped the old man, and falling into his chair he covered his face with his hands, his shoulders shaking.

"I want to say something else, please."

Picton lifted his tear-stained face to the man in the white wrapper, but John Wintermere was looking at Sylvia.

"I want to say this," he said; "that when the operation was well advanced I discovered that it was unnecessary."

"Unnecessary?" cried Sylvia.

And again he nodded.

"I am satisfied," he said, speaking slowly, "that had Dr. Crest's treatment been continued, your daughter would have made a complete recovery without recourse to the knife."

Then he walked from the room without another word.

IT was the anæsthetist whom Sylvia saw just before he left the house that night, and she talked to him as doctor to doctor.

"Yes, he's a wonderful chap, Wintermere," said that medico, with a sigh of admiration and envy. "She'll recover all right. Yes, he's a wonderful fellow. Good-night, Doctor."

She smiled to herself in the darkness of the porch before the house.

Wintermere was saying good-night to Picton, who was almost hysterical in his relief and happiness. When he came out Sylvia was waiting for him.

"Send your car on," she said, "I want to walk a little way with you."

It was a slow and a silent walk, and when the time for parting came, Sylvia turned to the man at her side and laid her hands on his shoulders.

"John," she said, "I'm going out of this profession."

"You're mad," he said, and his voice trembled. "You—you were right in this case."

She laughed quietly.

"You dear liar," she said, and kissed him.

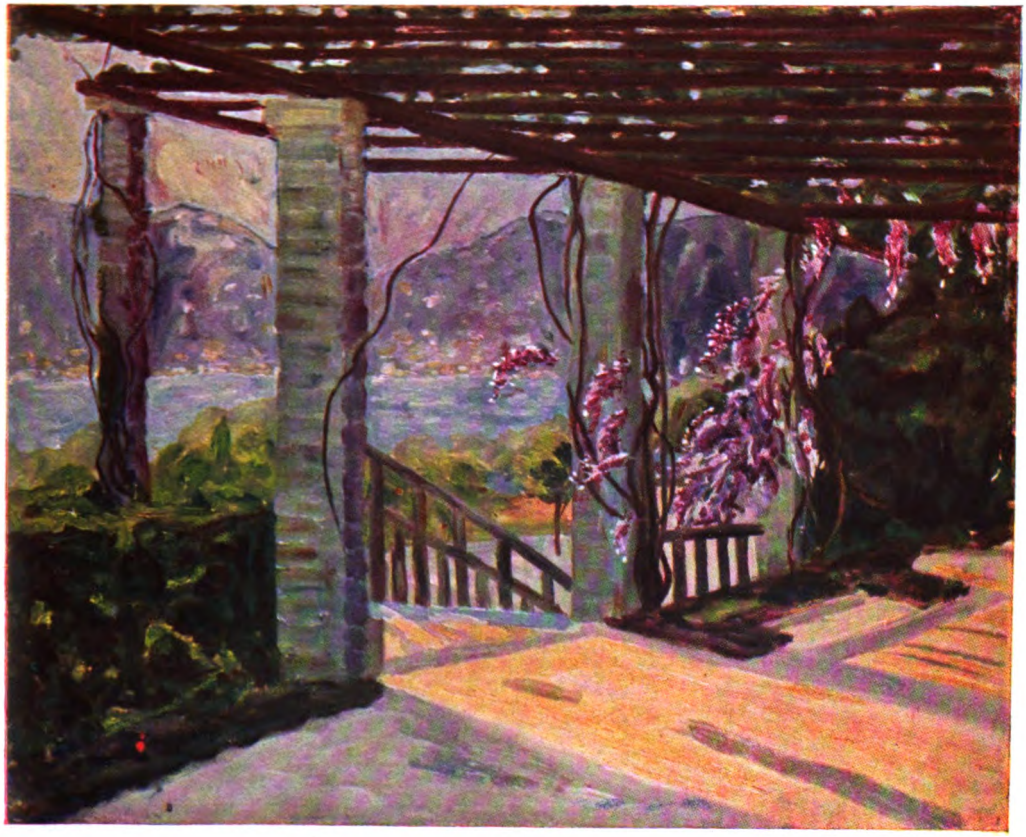
PAINTING AS A PASTIME

by

THE RT. HON. WINSTON CHURCHILL

WITH REPRODUCTIONS OF HIS PAINTINGS

I DO not submit these sketches to the public gaze because I am under any illusion about their merit. They are the productions of a week-end and holiday amateur who during the last few years has found a new pleasure, and who wishes to tell others of his luck. To have reached the age of forty without ever handling a brush or fiddling with a pencil, to have regarded with mature eye the painting of pictures of any kind as a mystery, to have stood agape before the chalk of the pavement artist, and then suddenly to find oneself plunged in the middle

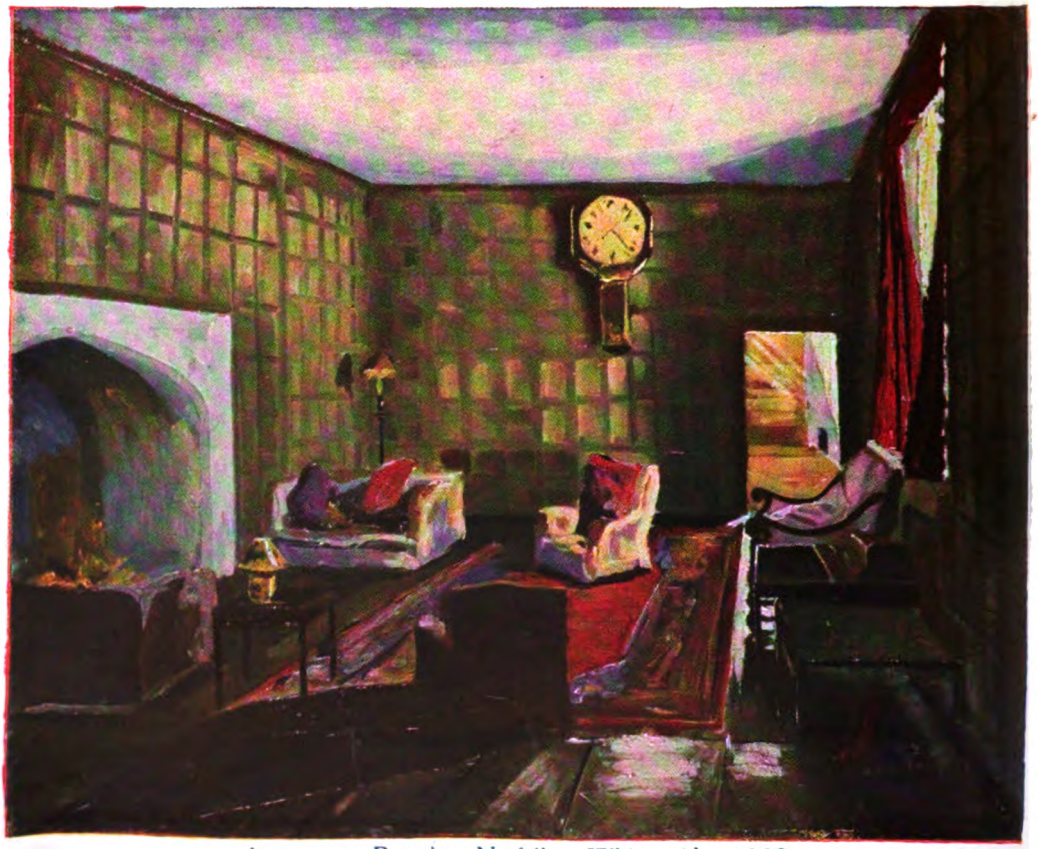


A villa at the Riviera.

of a new and intense form of interest and action with paints and palettes and canvases, and not to be discouraged by results, is an astonishing and enriching experience. I hope it may be shared by others. I should be glad if these lines, I should be proud if these sketches, induced others to try the experiment which I have tried, and if some at least were to find themselves dowered with an absorbing new amusement delightful to themselves, and at any rate not violently harmful to man or beast.

Newbuildings, Sussex. July, 1921.

I hope this is modest enough: because there is no subject on which I feel more humble or yet at the same time more natural. I do not presume to explain how to paint, but only how to get enjoyment. Do not turn the superior eye of critical passivity upon these efforts. Buy a paintbox and have a try. If you need something to occupy your leisure, to divert your mind from the daily round, to illuminate your holidays, do not be too ready to believe that you cannot find what you want here.



A room at Breccles, Norfolk. Whitsuntide, 1920.

The Moat, Breccles. August, 1921.

Even at the advanced age of forty! It would be a sad pity to shuffle or scramble along through one's playtime with golf and bridge, pottering, loitering, shifting from one heel to the other, wondering what on earth to do—as perhaps is the fate of some unhappy beings—when all the while, if you only knew, there is close at hand a wonderful new world of thought and craft, a sunlit garden gleaming with light and colour of which you have the key in your waistcoat-pocket. Inexpensive independence, a mobile and perennial pleasure apparatus, new mental food and exercise, the old harmonies and symmetries in an entirely different language, an added interest to every common scene, an occupation for every idle hour, an unceasing voyage of entrancing discovery—these are high prizes. Make quite sure they are not yours. After all, if you try and fail

there is not much harm done. The nursery will grab what the studio has rejected. And then you can always go out and kill some animal, humiliate some rival on the links, or despoil some friend across the green table. You really will not be worse off in any way. In fact you will be better off. You will know " beyond a peradventure," to quote a phrase disagreeably reminiscent, that that is really what you were meant to do in your hours of relaxation.

But if, on the contrary, you are inclined—late in life though it be—to reconnoitre a foreign sphere of limitless extent, then be persuaded that the first quality that is needed is Audacity. There really is no time for the deliberate approach. Two years of drawing lessons, three years of copying woodcuts, five years of plaster casts—these are for the young. They have enough to bear. And this thorough grounding is for those who, hearing the call in the morning of their days, are able to make painting their paramount lifelong vocation. The truth and beauty of line and form which by the slightest touch or twist of the brush a real artist imparts to every feature of his design must be founded on long, hard, persevering apprenticeship and a practice so habitual that it has become instinctive. We must not be too ambitious. We cannot aspire to masterpieces. We may content ourselves with a joy-ride in a paint-box. And for this Audacity is the only ticket.

I shall now relate my personal experience. When I left the Admiralty at the end of May, 1915, I still remained a member of the Cabinet and of the War Council. In this position I knew everything and could do nothing. The change from the intense executive activities of each day's work at the Admiralty to the narrowly-measured duties of a counsellor left me gasping. Like a sea-beast fished up from the depths, or a diver too suddenly hoisted, my veins threatened to burst from the fall in pressure. I had great anxiety and no means of relieving it; I had vehement convictions and small power to give effect to them. I had long hours of utterly unwonted leisure in which to contemplate the unfolding of

Racecourse, Nice, from under the railway bridge. January, 1921.

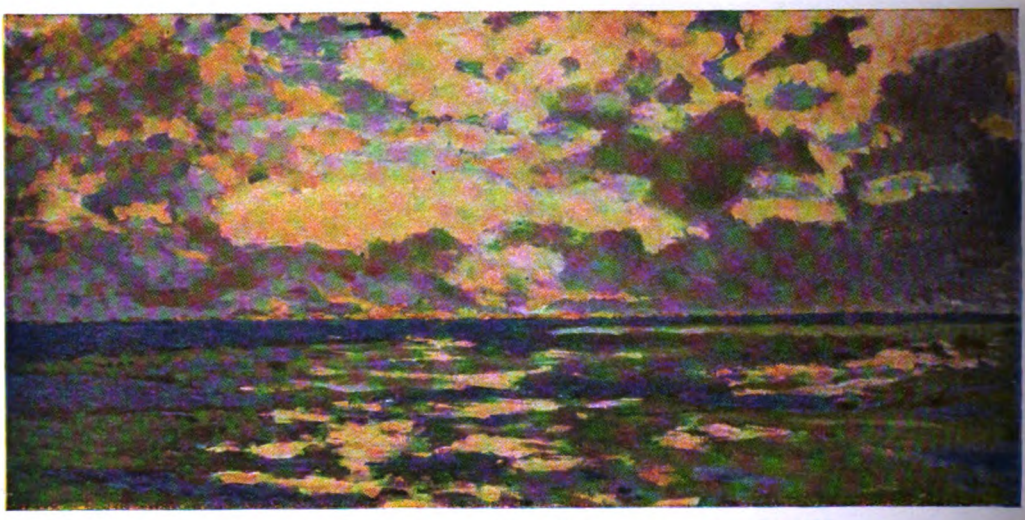
The harbour at St. Jean Cap Ferrat. January, 1921

the war. And then it was that the Muse of Painting came to my rescue—out of charity and out of chivalry, because after all she had nothing to do with me—and said, "Are these toys any good to you? They amuse some people."

Having bought a paint-box, an easel, and a canvas, the next step was *to begin*. But what a step to take! The palette gleamed with beads of colour; fair and white rose the canvas; the empty brush hung poised, heavy with destiny, irresolute in the air. My hand seemed arrested by a silent

The Blue Room at Lympne.

veto. But after all the sky on this occasion was unquestionably blue, and a pale blue at that. There could be no doubt that blue paint mixed with white should be put on the top part of the canvas. One really does not need to have had an artist's training to see that. It is a starting-point open to all. So very gingerly I mixed a little blue paint on the palette with a very small brush, and then with infinite precaution made a mark about as big as a bean upon the affronted snow-white shield. It was a challenge, a



Daybreak at Cassis, near Marseilles. September, 1920

The harbour at St Jean Cap Ferrat. January, 1921.

Mimizan Plage, Landes. This is the earliest of these sketches, and was painted during an afternoon in the Spring of 1920

deliberate challenge; but so subdued, so halting, indeed so cataleptic, that it deserved no response. At that moment the loud approaching sound of a motor-car was heard in the drive. From this chariot there stepped swiftly and lightly none other than the gifted wife of Sir John Lavery. "Painting! But what are you hesitating about? Let me have a brush—the big one." Splash into the turpentine, wallop into the blue and the white, frantic flourish on the palette—clean no longer—and then several large, fierce strokes and slashes of blue on the absolutely cowering canvas. Anyone could see that it could not hit back. No evil fate avenged the jaunty violence. The canvas grinned in helplessness before me. The spell was broken. The sickly inhibitions rolled away.

I seized the largest brush and fell upon my victim with Berserk fury.

I have never felt any awe of a canvas since.

Everyone knows the feelings with which one stands shivering on a spring-board, and the shock when a friendly foe steals up behind and hurls you into the flood, and the ardent glow which thrills you as you emerge breathless from the plunge.

This beginning with Audacity, or being thrown into the middle of it, is already a very great part of the art of painting.

But there is more in it than that.

La peinture à l'huile
Est bien difficile,
Mais c'est beaucoup plus beau
Que la peinture à l'eau.

I write no word in disparagement of water-colours. But there really is nothing like oils. You have a medium at your disposal which offers real power, if you only can find out how to use it. Moreover, it is easier to get a certain distance along the road by its means than by water-colour. First of all, you can correct mistakes much more easily. One sweep of the palette-knife "lifts" the blood and tears of a morning from the canvas and enables a fresh start to be made. Secondly, you can approach your problem from any direction. You need not build downwards awkwardly from white paper to your darkest dark. You may strike where you please, beginning if you will with a moderate central arrangement of middle tones, and then hurling in the extremes when the psychological moment comes. Lastly, the pigment itself is such nice stuff to handle (if it does not retaliate). You can build it on layer after layer if you like. You can keep on experimenting. You can change your plan to meet the exigencies of time or weather. And always remember you can scrape it all away.

Long Gallery at Sutton Place, near Guildford.

Just to paint is great fun. The colours are lovely to look at and delicious to squeeze out. Matching them, however crudely, with what you see is fascinating and absolutely absorbing. Try it if you have not done so—before you die. As one slowly begins to escape from the difficulties of choosing the right colours and laying them on in the right places and in the right way, wider considerations come into view. One begins to see, for instance, that painting a picture is like fighting a battle; and trying to paint a picture is, I suppose, like trying to fight a battle. It is, if anything, more exciting than fighting it successfully. But the principle is the same. It is the same kind of problem as unfolding a long, sustained, interlocked argument. It is a proposition which, whether of few or numberless parts, is commanded by a single unity of conception. And we think—though I cannot tell—that painting a great picture must require an intellect on the grand scale. There must be that all-embracing view which presents the beginning and the end, the whole and each part, as one instantaneous impression retentively and untiringly held in the mind. When we look at the larger Turners—canvases yards wide and tall—and observe that they are all done in one piece and represent one single second of time, and that every innumerable detail, however small, however distant, however subordinate, is set forth naturally and in its true proportion and relation, without effort, without failure, we must feel in presence of an intellectual manifestation the equal in quality and intensity of the finest achievements of warlike action, of forensic argument, or of scientific or philosophical adjudication.

IN all battles two things are usually required of the Commander-in-Chief: to make a good plan for his army and, secondly, to keep a strong reserve. Both these are also obligatory upon the painter. To make a plan, thorough reconnaissance of the country where the battle is to be fought is needed. Its fields, its mountains, its rivers, its bridges, its trees, its flowers, its atmosphere—all require and repay attentive observation from a special point of view. One is quite astonished to find how many things there are in the landscape, and in every object in it, one never noticed before. And this is a tremendous new pleasure and interest which invests every walk or drive with an added object. So many colours on the hillside, each different in shadow and in sunlight; such brilliant reflections in the pool, each a key lower than what they repeat; such lovely lights gilding or silvering surface or outline, all tinted exquisitely with pale colour, rose, orange, green, or violet. And I had lived for over forty years without ever noticing any of them except in a general way, as one might look at a crowd and say, "What a lot of people!"

I THINK this heightened sense of observation of Nature is one of the chief delights that have come to me through trying to paint. No doubt many people who are lovers of art have acquired it in a high degree without actually practising. But I expect that nothing will make one observe more quickly or more thoroughly than having to face the difficulty of representing the thing observed. And mind you, if you do observe accurately and with refinement, and if you do record what you have seen with tolerable correspondence, the result follows on the canvas with startling obedience. Even if only four or five main features are seized and truly recorded, these by themselves will carry a lot of ill-success or half-success. Answer five big questions in the examination paper correctly and well, and though you may not win a prize, at any rate you won't be absolutely ploughed.

But in order to make his plan, the General must not only reconnoitre the battle-ground, he must also study the achievements of the great Captains of the past. He must bring the observations he has collected in the field into comparison with the treatment of similar incidents by famous chiefs. Then the galleries of Europe take on a new—and to me at least a severely practical—interest. "This, then, is how —— painted a cataract. Exactly, and there is that same light I noticed last week in the waterfall at ——." And so on. You see the difficulty that baffled you yesterday; and you see how easily it has been overcome by a great or even by a skilful painter. Not only is your observation of Nature sensibly improved and developed, but you look at the masterpieces of art with an analysing and a comprehending eye.

THE whole world is open with all its treasures. The simplest objects have their beauty. Every garden presents innumerable fascinating problems. Every land, every parish, has its own tale to tell. And there are many lands differing from each other in countless ways, and each presenting delicious variants of colour, light, form, and definition. Obviously, then, armed with a paint-box, one cannot be bored, one cannot be left at a loose end, one cannot "have several days on one's hands." Good gracious! what there is to admire and how little time there is to see it in! For the first time one begins to envy Methuselah. No doubt he made a very indifferent use of his opportunities.

But it is in the use and withholding of

their reserves that the great commanders have generally excelled. After all, when once the last reserve has been thrown in, the commander's part is played. If that does not win the battle, he has nothing else to give. The event must be left to luck and to the fighting troops. But these last, in the absence of high direction, are apt to get into sad confusion, all mixed together in a nasty mess, without order or plan—and consequently without effect. Mere masses count no more. The largest brush, the brightest colours cannot even make an impression. The battlefield becomes a sea of mud mercifully veiled by the fog of war. It is evident there has been a serious defeat. Even though the General plunges in himself and emerges bespattered, as he sometimes does, he will not retrieve the day.

IN painting, the reserves consist in Proportion or Relation. And it is here that the art of the painter marches along the road which is traversed by all the greatest harmonies in thought. At one side of the palette there is white, at the other black; and neither is ever used "neat." Between these two rigid limits all the action must lie, all the power required must be generated. Black and white themselves placed in juxtaposition make no great impression; and yet they are the most that you can do in pure contrast. It is wonderful—after one has tried and failed often—to see how easily and surely the true artist is able to produce every effect of light and shade, of sunshine and shadow, of distance or nearness, simply by expressing justly the relations between the different planes and surfaces with which he is dealing. We think that this is founded upon a sense of proportion, trained no doubt by practice, but which in its essence is a frigid manifestation of mental power and size. We think that the same mind's eye that can justly survey and appraise and prescribe beforehand the values of a truly great picture in one all-embracing regard, in one flash of simultaneous and homogeneous comprehension, would also with a certain acquaintance with the special technique be able to pronounce with sureness upon any other high activity of the human intellect. This was certainly true of the great Italians.

I HAVE written in this way to try to show how varied are the delights which may be gained by those who enter hopefully and thoughtfully upon the pathway of painting; how enriched they will be in their daily vision, how fortified in their independence, how happy in their leisure. Whether you feel that your soul is pleased by the conception or contemplation of harmonies, or that your mind is stimulated by the aspect of magnificent problems, or whether you are content to find it fun to try to observe and depict the jolly things you see, the vistas of possibility are limited only by the shortness of life. Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb.

Try it, then, before it is too late and before you mock at me. Try it while there is time to overcome the preliminary difficulties. Learn enough of the language in your prime to open this new literature to your age. Plant a garden in which you can sit when digging days are done. It may be only a small garden, but you will see it grow. Year by year it will bloom and ripen. Year by year it will be better cultivated. The weeds will be cast out. The fruit-trees will be pruned and trained. The flowers will bloom in more beautiful combinations. There will be sunshine there even in the winter-time, and cool shade, and the play of shadow on the pathway in the shining days of June.

A further article by Mr. Winston Churchill will appear next month.

THE NIGHTMARE ROOM

by

A·CONAN DOYLE

ILLUSTRATED BY S·SEYMOUR LUCAS

THE sitting-room of the Masons was a very singular apartment. At one end it was furnished with considerable luxury. The deep sofas, the low, luxurious chairs, the voluptuous statuettes, and the rich curtains hanging from deep and ornamental screens of metal-work made a fitting frame for the lovely woman who was the mistress of the establishment. Mason, a young but wealthy man of affairs, had clearly spared no pains and no expense to meet every want and even every whim of his beautiful wife. It was natural that he should do so, for she had given up much for his sake. The most famous dancer in France, the heroine of a dozen extraordinary romances, she had resigned her life of glittering pleasure in order to share the fate of the young American, whose austere ways differed so widely from her own. In all that wealth could buy he tried to make amends for what she had lost. Some might perhaps have thought it in better taste had he not proclaimed this fact—had he not even allowed it to be printed—but save for some personal peculiarities of the sort, his conduct was that of a husband who has never for an instant ceased to be a lover. Even the presence of spectators would not prevent the public exhibition of his overpowering affection.

But the room was singular. At first it seemed familiar, and yet a longer acquaintance made one realize its sinister peculiarities. It was silent—very silent. No footfall could be heard upon those rich carpets and heavy rugs. A struggle—even the fall of a body—would make no sound. It was strangely colourless also, in a light which seemed always subdued. Nor was it all furnished in equal taste. One would have said that when the young banker had lavished thousands upon this boudoir, this inner jewel-case for his precious possession, he had failed to count the cost and had suddenly been arrested by a threat to his own solvency. It was luxurious where it looked out upon the busy street below. At the farther side it was bare, spartan, and reflected rather the taste of a most ascetic man than of a pleasure-loving woman. Perhaps that was why she only came there for a few hours, sometimes two, sometimes four, in the day, but while she was there she lived intensely, and within this nightmare room Lucille Mason was a very different and a more dangerous woman than elsewhere.

Dangerous—that was the word. Who could doubt it who saw her delicate figure stretched upon the great bearskin which draped the sofa? She was leaning upon her right elbow, her delicate but determined chin resting upon her hand, while her eyes, large and languishing, adorable but inexorable, stared out in front of her with a fixed intensity which had in it something vaguely terrible. It was a lovely face—a child's face, and yet Nature had placed there some subtle mark, some indefinable expression, which told that a devil lurked within. It had been noticed that dogs shrank from her, and that children screamed and ran from her caresses. There are instincts which are deeper than reason.

Upon this particular afternoon something had greatly moved her. A letter was in her hand, which she read and re-read with a tightening of those delicate little eyebrows and a grim setting of those delicious lips. Suddenly she started, and a shadow of fear softened the feline menace of her features. She raised herself upon her arm, and her eyes were fixed eagerly upon the door. She was listening intently—listening for something which she dreaded. For a moment a smile of relief played over her expressive face. Then with a look of horror she stuffed her letter into her dress. She had hardly

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done so before the door opened, and a young man came briskly into the room. It was Archie Mason, her husband—the man whom she had loved, the man for whom she had sacrificed her European fame, the man whom now she regarded as the one obstacle to a new and wonderful experience.

THE American was a man about thirty, clean-shaven, athletic, dressed to perfection in a closely-cut suit, which outlined his perfect figure. He stood at the door with his arms folded, looking intently at his wife, with a face which might have been a handsome, sun-tinted mask save for those vivid eyes. She still leaned upon her elbow, but her eyes were fixed on his. There was something terrible in the silent exchange. Each interrogated the other, and each conveyed the thought that the answer to their question was vital. He might have been asking, "What have you done?" She in her turn seemed to be saying, "What do you know?" Finally, he walked forward, sat down upon the bearskin beside her, and taking her delicate ear gently between his fingers, turned her face towards his.

"Lucille," he said, "are you poisoning me?"

She sprang back from his touch with horror in her face and protests upon her lips. Too moved to speak, her surprise and her anger showed themselves rather in her darting hands and her convulsed features. She tried to rise, but his grasp tightened upon her wrist. Again he asked a question, but this time it had deepened in its terrible significance.

"Lucille, why are you poisoning me?"

"You are mad, Archie! Mad!" she gasped.

His answer froze her blood. With pale parted lips and blanched cheeks she could only stare at him in helpless silence, whilst he drew a small bottle from his pocket and held it before her eyes.

"It is from your jewel-case!" he cried.

Twice she tried to speak and failed. At last the words came slowly one by one from her contorted lips:—

"At least I never used it."

Again his hand sought his pocket. From it he drew a sheet of paper, which he unfolded and held before her.

"It is the certificate of Dr. Angus. It shows the presence of twelve grains of antimony. I have also the evidence of Du Val, the chemist who sold it."

Her face was terrible to look at. There was nothing to say. She could only lie with that fixed hopeless stare like some fierce creature in a fatal trap.

"Well?" he asked.

There was no answer save a movement of desperation and appeal.

"Why?" he said. "I want to know why." As he spoke his eye caught the edge of the letter which she had thrust into her bosom. In an instant he had snatched it. With a cry of despair she tried to regain it, but he held her off with one hand while his eyes raced over it.

"Campbell!" he gasped. "It was Campbell!"

She had found her courage again. There was nothing more to conceal. Her face set hard and firm. Her eyes were deadly as daggers.

"Yes," she said, "it is Campbell."

"My God! Campbell of all men!"

He rose and walked swiftly about the room. Campbell, the grandest man that he had ever known, a man whose whole life had been one long record of self-denial, of courage, of every quality which marks the chosen man. And yet he, too, had fallen a victim to this siren, and had been dragged down to such a level that he had betrayed, in intention if not in actual deed, the man whose hand he shook in friendship. It was incredible—and yet here was the passionate, pleading letter imploring his wife to fly and share the fate of a penniless man. Every word of the letter showed that Campbell had at least no thought of Mason's death, which would have removed all difficulties. That devilish solution was the outcome of the deep and wicked brain which brooded within that perfect habitation.

Mason was a man in a million, a philosopher, a thinker, with a broad and tender sympathy for others. For an instant his soul had been submerged in his bitterness. He could for that brief period have slain both his wife and Campbell, and gone to his own death with the serene mind of a man who has done his plain duty. But already, as he paced the room, milder thoughts had begun to prevail. How could he blame Campbell? He knew the absolute witchery of this woman. It was not only her wonderful physical beauty. She had a unique power of seeming to take an interest in a man, in writhing into his inmost conscience, in penetrating those parts of his nature which were too sacred for the world, and in seeming to stimulate him towards ambition and even towards virtue. It was just there that the deadly cleverness of her net was shown. He remembered how it had been in his own case. She was free then—or so he thought—and he had been able to marry her. But suppose she had not been free. Suppose she had been married. And suppose she had taken possession of his soul in the same way. Would he have stopped there? Would he have been able to draw off with his unfulfilled longings? He was bound to admit that with all his New England strength he could not have done so. Why, then, should he feel

"In an instant he had snatched the letter. With a cry of despair she tried to regain it, but he held her off with one hand while his eyes raced over it."

so bitter with his unfortunate friend who was in the same position? It was pity and sympathy which filled his mind as he thought of Campbell.

And she? There she lay upon the sofa, a poor broken butterfly, her dreams dispersed, her plot detected, her future dark and perilous. Even for her, poisoner as she was, his heart relented. He knew something of her history. He knew her as a spoiled child from birth, untamed, unchecked, sweeping everything easily before her from her cleverness, her beauty, and her charm. She had never known an obstacle. And now one had risen across her path, and she had madly and wickedly tried to remove it. But if she had wished to remove it, was not that in itself a sign that he had been found wanting—that he was not the man who could bring her peace of mind and contentment of heart? He was too stern and self-contained for that sunny, volatile nature. He was of the North, and she of the South, drawn strongly together for a time by the law of opposites, but impossible for permanent union. He should have seen to this—he should have understood it. It was on him, with his superior brain, that the responsibility for the situation lay. His heart softened towards her as it would to a little child which was in helpless trouble. For a time he had paced the room in silence, his lips compressed, his hands clenched till his nails had marked his palms. Now with a sudden movement he sat beside her and took her cold and inert hand in his. One thought beat in his brain. "Is it chivalry, or is it weakness?" The question sounded in his ears, it framed itself before his eyes, he could almost fancy that it materialized itself and that he saw it in letters which all the world could read.

It had been a hard struggle, but he had conquered.

"You shall choose between us, dear," he said. "If really you are sure—*sure*, you understand—that Campbell could make you happy as a husband, I will not be the obstacle."

"A divorce!" she gasped.

His hand closed upon the bottle of poison. "You can call it that," said he.

A new strange light shone in her eyes as she looked at him. This was a man who had been unknown to her. The hard, practical American had vanished. In his place she seemed to have a glimpse of a hero and a saint, a man who could rise to an inhuman height of unselfish virtue. Both her hands were round that which held the fatal phial.

"Archie," she cried, "you could forgive me even that!"

He smiled at her. "You are only a little wayward kiddie after all."

Her arms were outstretched to him when there was a tap at the door, and the maid entered in the strange silent fashion in which all things moved in that nightmare room. There was a card on the tray. She glanced at it.

"Captain Campbell! I will not see him."

Mason sprang to his feet.

"On the contrary, he is most welcome. Show him up this instant."

A FEW minutes later a tall, sun-burned young soldier had been ushered into the room. He came forward with a smile upon his pleasant features, but as the door closed behind him, and the faces before him resumed their natural expressions, he paused irresolutely and glanced from one to the other.

"Well?" he asked.

Mason stepped forward and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"I bear no ill-will," he said.

"Ill-will?"

"Yes, I know all. But I might have done the same myself had the position been reversed."

Campbell stepped back and looked a question at the lady. She nodded and shrugged her graceful shoulders. Mason smiled.

"You need not fear that it is a trap for a confession. We have had a frank talk upon the matter. See, Jack, you were always a sportsman. Here's a bottle. Never mind how it came here. If one or other of us drink it, it would clear the situation." His manner was wild, almost delirious. "Lucille, which shall it be?"

There had been a strange force at work in the nightmare room. A third man was there, though not one of the three who stood in the crisis of their life's drama had time or thought for him. How long he had been there—how much he had heard—none could say. In the corner farthest from the little group he lay crouched against the wall, a sinister snake-like figure, silent and scarcely moving save for a nervous twitching of his clenched right hand. He was concealed from view by a square case and by a dark cloth drawn cunningly above it, so as to screen his features. Intent, watching eagerly every new phase of the drama, the moment had almost come for his intervention. But the three thought little of that. Absorbed in the interplay of their own emotions they had lost sight of a force stronger than themselves—a force which might at any moment dominate the scene.

"Are you game, Jack?" asked Mason.

The soldier nodded.

"No!—for God's sake, no!" cried the woman.

Mason had uncorked the bottle, and

" Jack, you were always a sportsman. Here's a bottle. If one or other of us drink it, it would clear the situation."

turning to the side table he drew out a pack of cards. Cards and bottle stood together.

" We can't put the responsibility on her," he said. " Come, Jack, the best of three."

The soldier approached the table. He fingered the fatal cards. The woman, leaning upon her hand, bent her face forward and stared with fascinated eyes.

Then and only then the bolt fell.

The stranger had risen, pale and grave.

All three were suddenly aware of his presence. They faced him with eager inquiry in their eyes. He looked at them coldly, sadly, with something of the master in his bearing.

" How is it ? " they asked, all together.

" Rotten ! " he answered. " Rotten ! We'll take the whole reel once more to-morrow."

SINGING AS A PROFESSION

by

CARUSO

This article was written by the great singer before his death especially for THE STRAND MAGAZINE. To all who are thinking of music as a profession it will be found of the greatest interest.

TO me music as a profession is life. For life without music is what you call a "happening," a state of things I cannot, I dare not, imagine. It is not for me to say whether I have, or have not, been successful from an artistic point of view, but I do know that even had I failed entirely to make my calling a remunerative one I should yet have wished, and should still wish, even to-day, to remain a singer. My art is my life, and I cannot imagine feelings other than this coming from any singer.

At the same time, I have travelled too far and have visited too many towns and cities not to realize to the full that music is not a profession for the crowd. It is a profession only for those who, when engagements come not, when the purse is low, when the outlook is black—in short, when no light is seen ahead—can find solace and consolation in their art. The true artist alone can do this; the mediocre performer despairs because he has not the courage begotten of the knowledge that he possesses something which the world wants, but yet, at the moment, does not know that it wants. But, "in time," your real artist says to himself, as he meditates over his present lack of success, "it is as sure to want me as it is certain that the night follows the day, for nothing but a miracle can serve to hide my ability; and," he will probably add, with a sigh, "the days of miracles are over and gone, dead for ever."

Yes, yes, music is a great profession. It is a profession than which I can think of none better. In truth, believe me or believe me not, as you may think fit, there is no better profession. But listen one moment. Music more often than not is born in us. It is as much part and parcel of us as our very limbs. True, it may require a certain amount of training to bring this musical talent to light, but the talent is there all the same. The training is merely just that little bit of nourishment that is wanted to infuse it with life.

This is where the real danger of music lies. Music is such a great power, it radiates so much light and life, that it is only natural that it should attract the moths. And by the moths I refer to those so-called musicians who regard their art as a money-maker. This, music, in itself, is not. There are far too many musicians in the world to justify anyone mistaking a certain knowledge of music as an asset on which they can rely as an income-earner. Surely the idea is absurd! Why, if music were an orthodox profession—that is to say, if a certain knowledge, higher or lower, as the case may be, could command an income higher or lower in proportion to the amount of knowledge, then there would be some sort of a living for every singer, every violinist, every pianist.

But there is not. And why? Simply because the successful musician makes his or her own public. Your true artist gathers fresh admirers every time he sings or plays. There is no credit to him for this. He simply cannot help it. His art is the magnet. That is why music as a profession is a magnet to the crowd than which there are few that attract more. And that is why it is so dangerous to those who choose to regard it as purely a money-maker.

In conclusion, let me say that I feel convinced that those who look upon music from a financial point of view first, and

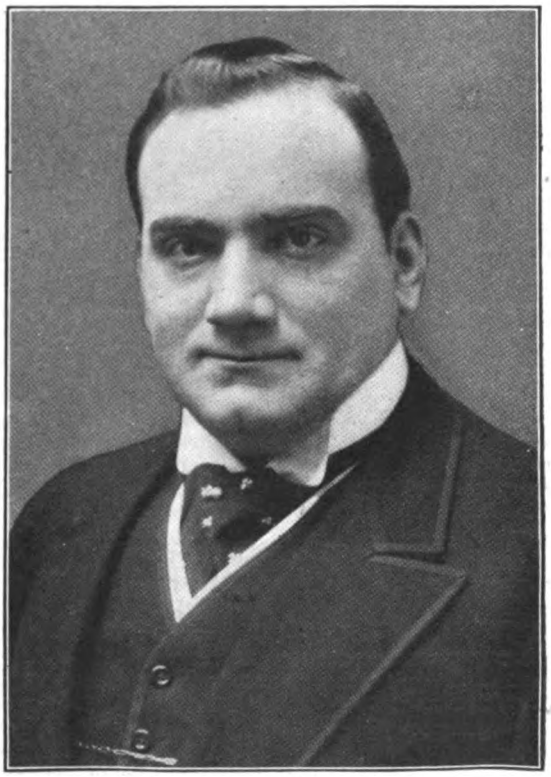
afterwards from an artistic point of view, would be wise to choose some other profession. Some people sing because they want to; others sing because they are asked to sing. But the true artist sings because he *must* sing. It matters not to him (or her) whether financial considerations are at stake or not, for your real artist knows that whenever and wherever he sings and plays he will make friends.

Be sure, therefore, before you take to music as a profession that you have a "call"; without that "call"—the presence of which you alone can feel—you would be wise to devote your talent to the amusement of your friends and relations, for music is the most whimsical master in the world. If it really "calls" you, it is your friend for life, it will help you over every difficulty that may cross your path; but if you make advances to music unbidden, there is no master who can lash you and spurn you in more merciless fashion. You understand me? I am glad.

IN "FAUST."

IN "PAGLIACCI."

IN "L'AFRICANA."



IN "TOSCA."

IN "AIDA."

IN "ROSENCAVALIER."

ENRICO CARUSO.

Photos: The Gramophone Co.

MR. PAUL

by

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY S. SEYMOUR LUCAS

I.

A PAIR of irresponsible young ex-flying officers are disturbing and unprofitable visitors to announce themselves in a busy man's City office. But Dicky Franks and Henry Jefferson are of that divine elect for whom, not to speak it profanely, the sun stands still upon Gibeon and the moon in the Vale of Ajalon; the very Old Lady of Threadneedle Street herself would, I feel sure, push up her spectacles to her forehead and beam upon them, in a suspension of her activities, if they chose to announce themselves in her sacred precincts. I dictated the last few words of my all but completed morning's correspondence, and sent a message that I should be happy to receive them. To my surprise, my clerk ushered in, not two, but three young men.

"Don't say you're not glad to see us, Ogilvy!" said Dicky, shaking hands with an exuberance which released me only for a similar expression of cordiality from Jefferson, "—even if we have interrupted you in your money-grubbing. Let me introduce our friend!—Mr. Paul—Major Ogilvy."

I extended a hand of greeting to their companion. He was a mere slip of a boy, distinctly good-looking. But there was a gravity in the refinement of his handsome features, a modesty in his demeanour, which appealed sympathetically to me at sight. He met my gaze rather diffidently with intelligent, large, grey eyes, which nevertheless, I felt, summed me up pretty shrewdly.

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Paul," I said, and then turned to my friends. "Take a pew all of you—make yourselves at home. What's the trouble?"

The three of them seated themselves.

"No trouble at all," said Jefferson, grinning at Franks. "Quite the contrary."

"I'm delighted to hear it," said I. "It's a new experience for you."

"Ogilvy," said Franks, in his most serious manner, "we've got a first-class stunt on and we want you to come into it."

"Thanks," I responded, dryly, with a gesture indicative of my encumbered desk. "I've got one here and it keeps me busy."

"Oh, *that!*" Franks dismissed my business activities with a magnificent contempt. "I mean something really worth while, Ogilvy. Just let me explain——"

I cut him short.

"You can save yourself the trouble, Dicky," I said. "I know your first-class stunts. My neck is sound at this moment and I mean to keep it so. I won't even listen to you," I added. "I've settled down to respectability during the week and golf on Sundays—and I don't want to be put off my stroke."

"Please, Major Ogilvy!" interjected the boy Paul.

I weakened under the appeal in his pleasant young voice.

"Well," I admitted, grudgingly, "you can tell me if you like, but, I warn you in advance, there's nothing doing so far as I am concerned."

Franks only grinned with exasperating cocksureness.

"Ogilvy," he said, "a man like you can bury himself in a pile of ledgers—but he can't persuade himself he's dead. Do you remember what it feels like, five thousand feet up on a fine morning?"

"Shut up!" I said, snappily. "I've got other things to remember."

They all smiled at the obvious self-betrayal in my voice. Confound them! The thrill of swift motion high up in the clean air was precisely one of the most disturbing of the memories I banished from my mind each morning as I entered my office-prison.

"You're going to let all the other things rip for the inside of a week," pursued Franks, imperturbably, "and you are

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coming with us—over the clouds and far away!"

"Indeed!" said I, affecting a cynicism I hoped was successful. "And whither, may I ask? To the Mountains of the Moon?"

"To Russia!" said Jefferson and Franks, in a simultaneity of definition.

"To Russia? Many thanks—but I'm not a Labour leader. Bolshevism doesn't interest me."

"Oh, hang Bolshevism——" began Franks.

"It's more likely to hang—or shoot—you!" I riposted.

"That's why we want you to come with us," interjected Jefferson. "An ex-G.S.O. Machine Guns is the very fellow we need."

I stared at them, and then smiled in my most superior staff-officer manner.

"You've declared war upon the Soviet Government, I suppose?" I said, sarcastically.

"That's about the size of it," agreed Franks, as though it were the most natural thing in the world. "Now, quit rotting, Ogilvy, and listen to us. Our friend here," he indicated the lad, "who prefers to be known as Mr. Paul, is the young hopeful of a Grand Duke, or words to that effect. Papa Paul saw the Revolution coming, and was wily enough to turn about a million pounds' worth of his belongings into precious stones and other portable property. He put it all into a chest and buried it on his country estate, somewhere out in the wilds. Unfortunately, before he could dig it up and get away with it, the Bolshies got away with him——"

The lad interrupted, and I noticed that his eyes were filled with tears.

"My father was shot by the Extraordinary Commission, Major Ogilvy," he said, in the precisely-pronounced English of the well-instructed foreigner. "I would like you to understand that although, of course, the valuables and securities Mr. Franks mentions would be very welcome to me, there are family papers buried in that chest which are even more important."

The lad's quiet, level-headed manner was decidedly sympathetic to me, and I felt that a crude jeer at their now evident project was somehow out of place.

"But suppose your Bolshevist friends have already dug it up?" I said to him.

"I think not," he answered. "They know of it, and have already looked for it more than once. But I have good reason to believe they have not found it."

"Can you be sure of finding it yourself, then?"

"I helped my father to bury it," replied the boy, with a smile.

"And so you three young hotheads propose to fly an aeroplane into Russia and salve the treasure, is that it?" I said to the three of them.

"No," corrected Franks, calmly. "We four."

"You can leave me out," I replied, with emphasis. "But I confess I'd like to know how you propose to get there—and still more how you propose to get back."

FOR answer, Franks took a map of Europe from his pocket and opened it upon my desk. An inch or so to the south-east of Kieff was a red-ink cross. Franks put his finger on it.

"That's the spot," he said. 'Simplicity itself. It's a little more than fifteen hundred miles. Two flying days. We come down in Germany somewhere near here," he indicated the neighbourhood of Breslau, "for a night——"

"You'll have some difficulty in getting passports for that part of Germany," I said. "That's the plebiscite area."

"Oh, passports be hanged!" he replied. "Who's going to stop us in the air? We ought to be able to find some lonely spot on the countryside where we can come down at nightfall unobserved and remain till morning. If we're challenged we'll say that we're on our way to the Inter-Allied Commission at Breslau."

"Well, you might bluff through," I agreed, without enthusiasm. "And then?"

"We start off at dawn and in the romantic dusk of eve we come unobtrusively to earth on Mr. Paul's estate—and there we are! Half an hour's night-work with a spade, and then homeward bound!"

"It sounds too easy," was my only comment. "What about petrol for such a long distance?"

"We carry it with us," replied Franks. "We've converted the old bus to take enough for forty-eight flying-hours in her tanks, and there's plenty of room for a reserve supply inside."

"You've got the aeroplane, then!" I ejaculated, in surprise. It had not occurred to me that their project had passed beyond the stage of merely talking about it.

"Of course we have! We fixed up everything before coming to you. She's a beauty—built for an international air-route company that fizzled out. A hundred miles an hour and an engine that runs like a dream! We put her through a pretty stiff testing, I give you my word. But now we're ready to the last detail. Everything's on board—rations, petrol, oil, spares—and the jewel of a Hotchkiss machine-gun for you to amuse yourself with if any of Mr. Paul's friends should try to be too intimate."

"Many thanks!" I said, emphatically. "But I'm not coming!"

Jefferson turned to me with a gesture of disappointed resignation.

"Well, of course, Ogilvy, if you won't you won't, and that's all there is to it. It's rotten bad luck for us. We made sure you'd come. But won't you come down as far as the aerodrome and have a look at the machine? Do—be a pal! It will be something to think you have seen her—we shall sort of feel you're with us. Won't you? We have a car waiting outside."

Really, there was nothing in the office to detain me that morning, and the lad's pleading voice made me feel thoroughly mean.

"All right," I agreed. "I'll go as far as looking at her. And we'll all have a final lunch together afterwards."

The good-looking face of young Mr. Paul flushed with pleasure at my decision. He was decidedly an attractive youth, that boy. His obvious keenness for my company flattered me.

THEIR car was, in fact, waiting for them in the quiet street outside my office. As we piled into it I noticed a motor-cyclist—an uncommon appearance in this business quarter—tinkering at his machine by the kerbstone some twenty yards away. The man looked up sharply at us. A minute later we were threading our way through the complex traffic of a main City thoroughfare, and I forgot him.

It was not until we were well out on a Surrey high-road that any possible significance in this individual occurred to me. We had slowed up to the obstruction of a heavy steam-tractor suddenly disclosed by a bend in the road. A moment later a motor-cyclist came full tilt round the corner behind us and shot past. We edged by the steam-tractor and sped once more along an open road. There was our motor-cyclist, a little ahead of us, halted and again tinkering with his machine. He looked up as we passed him, and I had a clear impression of his face. It was the same individual I had seen outside the office. I turned to young Paul, who sat beside me.

"Have you any reason to suppose you are being shadowed?" I said.

He smiled.

"They follow me everywhere."

"Bolshevist agents?"

He nodded.

"They won't hurt me I'm too valuable. They just watch my movements. If I start for Russia, they will telegraph *viâ* Germany or Finland to their Government."

"And you will be stopped?"

"Not at all! I shall find them waiting for me on my father's estate. They can't find that box without me!" He laughed youthfully. "But I shall be too quick for them. We shall be back before they realize what has happened."

I began a mental calculation of the time necessary for a message to be transmitted to Petrograd and thence into effective action at that spot marked on the map with a red cross to the south-east of Kieff, but my ignorance of the condition of the Russian telegraph service defeated it.

We turned off the main road towards the aerodrome, entered, and stopped before one of the hangars, a little isolated from the rest, and descended from the car. As we entered the great shed I looked round behind us and saw a motor-cyclist get off his machine by the distant entrance-gates. Young Paul only smiled and shrugged his shoulders when I drew his attention to him.

"What can he do?" he said, contemptuously.

A moment later I had forgotten the motor-cyclist in my admiration of the beautiful machine within the hangar. She lay there, her wide-stretched wings almost filling the shed, like an immense bird ready for flight, waiting only for the great doors to open and release her. Built as she was for international passenger traffic, a long graceful saloon body enclosed her fuselage from nose to tail. I followed Franks up the ladder into her interior, went forward into the pilot's cockpit, where the dials of the navigating instruments, their needles at rest, confronted the empty seat, and the control-wheel on its diagonally-set column awaited his skilful hands.

He turned to me.

"Wouldn't you like to see what she can do?"

The bright sunshine came through the partially-opened doors of the hangar in a broad beam of illuminated motes. Beyond was that glorious blue sky. The temptation was irresistible.

"I should love it!" I said, the words uttered before I had given myself leave to speak.

He grinned at me.

"You're not so dead as you think you are, Ogilvy!"

A minute or two later a couple of mechanics and the two pilots were pushing the machine out into the sunlight. Young Paul stood with me on the grass. I noticed the brightness of his expressive eyes as he turned them on me.

"You are going for a flight, Major Ogilvy?" he asked.

"Just for a short spin," I replied.

"Oh, good!"

His delight was obvious, his pleasant voice high on a note of excitement. Franks came up with a couple of flying-coats over his arm.

"The motor-cyclist looked up as we passed him, and I had a clear impression of his face. It was the same individual I had seen outside the office."

"Here you are, you fellows!" he said, holding them out to us.

I slipped into mine and turned to assist young Paul. In his excitement he had got the right breast outside the left, and was fumbling on the wrong side for buttons that were not there. He blushed youthfully as I pointed out his error.

He was decidedly an attractive boy, this youngster. I began to feel rather like a benevolent uncle towards him. There was nothing decadent about this scion of the Russian aristocracy. He was eminently a lad of spirit.

We all clambered up into the interior of the aeroplane. Franks handed each of us a set of the microphone apparatus which renders conversation audible despite the noise of the engine during flight.

"We may as well hear each other speak," he said. Then he invited me to the mechanic's seat beside him in the cockpit. Jefferson and Paul remained in the saloon. Franks slid back the upper part of one of the windows in front of us as we settled into our places. "We'll have a chestful of fresh air after that stuffy City," he remarked. "Ready?"

He switched on the self-starter. The great propeller in front of us swung over in a slow revolution that leaped suddenly, with a startling series of reports from the engine, into a whirling blurr that quickened to a rapidity beyond vision. I felt a slight bump. We were moving over the tussocky grass. A renewal of an old, remembered thrill gripped me. Our speed increased. The roar of the engine swallowed the voice of a gesticulating mechanic, beat upon the ears in a deafening intensity. The grass fled behind us. We lifted from it slightly, touched it in bouncing contact yet once or twice more, as though we were ourselves a thing of air. A rush of wind came in at the window with a blast that almost choked me, and the roar of the engine leaped with accentuated power to its fullest violence. We pitched slightly upon an impalpable sea, lifted our nose definitely upward. The grass was far below. We banked and swerved above the diminished hangars. I saw the white spot of an upturned face below us for an instant. It was our motor-cyclist. We climbed, in wide spirals, up into the blue sky.

Franks shut the little window above our heads.

"Too much of a good thing!" he shouted. "But what a morning!"

We climbed until the barograph needle quivered over five thousand, and sped south-eastward until far ahead there glimmered the metallic dark-blue of distant sea, fringed with a gleam of thin white foam.

Franks turned to me. He pointed to the map-holder on the dashboard in front of us. There were two maps—a small one of the whole of Europe, marked with that red cross to the south-east of Kieff, and a large-scale representation of the immediate environment of the aerodrome. It was the map of Europe that he touched; his finger on the eastern frontier of Germany.

"We've got a twenty-mile wind behind us," he said. "We can make our halfway-house before dark to-night. Are you game, Ogilvy? Be a sport!"

His eager, adventure-bright eyes were themselves an almost irresistible appeal. All my prudence was gone from me. This rarefied upper atmosphere got into my blood with a kind of intoxication that transformed my sense of values. The obligations accumulating in my stuffy City office seemed absurd in their pettiness. I looked for a second on the last few miles of my own country jutting like a map into the sea—and cut myself adrift from all its implications of security.

"Go ahead!" I exclaimed, recklessly. "I'm your man!"

I felt a touch upon my shoulder. It was young Paul, close behind me. He had heard my words, and smiled at me in frank delight. Then, suddenly diffident at his familiarity, he withdrew his hand.

"I knew you'd come, Major Ogilvy!" he cried. "Now I'm sure we shall be successful!"

II.

OUR long journey through the air was delightful, but unchequered by any startling event. For that first night we descended unobtrusively to a level meadow between wooded hills on the northern slopes of the Riesengebirge, and camped in a solitude utterly undisturbed. The next morning, as the first rays of the sun reddened the pine trunks on the hills above us, we rose once more, with a roar that re-echoed down the valley, into a sky of perfect clearness. All day we sped eastward, at an altitude too great for exact observation of the ground beneath. We had no desire to be spotted from below. For aught we knew our motor-cyclist had already got word to Petrograd of our departure. In that case it was possible that already a watch was being kept for our appearance in the sky. The Bolshevists possessed some kind of air-service, we knew, but we saw no sign of an aerial patrol. We were alone in the immensity of the blue heaven. But our machine-gun was mounted and in readiness. Franks and Jefferson, taking alternate shifts at the controls, sat side by side most of the day in the cockpit, checked off towns, woods, and rivers with their map.

A fresh headwind reduced our speed considerably, and the sun had already set when we passed, at an immense height, over Kieff. It was deep dusk when the lad Paul, standing behind the pilots in a conference of map-reading, pointed forward and below to the dark earth far beneath.

"We should be about five miles away in a straight line," he said.

Franks nodded. The roar of the engine ceased suddenly. In a hush uncanny to our sound-beaten ears, our nose dipped responsive to his touch on the steering pillar, and we went down, down, down, in a long volplane. Four pairs of eyes peered eagerly through the windows of the cockpit as we rushed silently through the evening air. A large clearing showed itself, grey amid blackness, a road, bifurcating in a semicircular sweep, glimmering in the twilight and distinguishing it from its tenebrous environment. It was slightly to one side of us.

"There!" ejaculated the lad Paul, in an excited undertone. "There!" He pointed to the clearing.

WE had perhaps five or six hundred feet of altitude. The machine swerved towards the open space, held on its downward course towards the earth that seemed to swell to a monstrous largeness to our unaccustomed eyes. The walls of a large mansion defined themselves patchy-white in front of us. It slid under us, gaped at us—hollow, fire-gutted ruins. The house had been destroyed. We swung round with consummate skill, without so much as a touch on the engine, into what there was of wind, grounded, bumped once or twice, taxied a score of yards over uneven grass, and stopped. We had arrived!

Franks stood up from the controls. His drawn face, his tight-pressed lips, were eloquent of the strain he had been through, but he made no comment. He opened the windows of the cockpit and listened. The silence which encompassed us could almost be felt.

Franks nodded in satisfaction.

"There seems no one about," he said. "We've got it to ourselves, I hope. Now—first thing—a council of war. We'll define our position on young Paul's plan."

We all went aft to the saloon, carefully blinded the windows so that no ray might escape to betray us, and then switched on the light.

The lad Paul produced a surveyor's plan from his pocket.

"We are here," he said, indicating a spot near the site of the mansion. "The chest is buried there"—he ran his finger across the plan—"among the trees about five hundred yards away."

Franks set his pocket-compass on the plan and took a bearing.

"Good," he said. "We know where we are. Well, first a mouthful of food—I'm ravenous. And then we'll get on with the job."

We were all furiously hungry. So, *nem. con.*, we set up the folding table, fished out a miscellaneous assortment of tins, and ate until we could eat no more.

"One whiff of a gasper," said Franks. "We daren't smoke outside."

I passed my case to him and Jefferson, and then tossed it across to young Paul, who sat at the other side of the saloon, watching us with eyes bright with suppressed excitement. He fumbled the catch, let the case fall to the floor between knees that jerked awkwardly apart.

"Pity they don't teach you Russian boys to play cricket, Paul!" I chipped at him. We were all in a state of nervous tension, and I felt that any jest, however feeble, was a wholesome relaxation of the strain.

The boy flushed in humiliation, and I kicked myself for hurting his feelings

"At any rate, Major Ogilvy, you will find that I can play what you English call 'the game,'" he answered, resentfully. "I shall be glad if you will treat me as a man, and not as a boy. It is a man's game we are all of us playing here to-night."

"Quite right, Paul," I accepted the rebuke. "I'm sorry. It *is* a man's game, and you are as good a man as any of us." I liked the boy's spirit immensely, and our long hours of conversation together in the saloon, while the aeroplane sped over Germany and Russia, had awakened in me something of a real affection for him. He was so surprisingly intelligent, and so obviously of sterling metal. I had been especially struck with his utter fearlessness of the very real dangers we were affronting. "We're glad to have you with us," I assured him, and then I turned to the others. "Now, lads! What's the plan of campaign?"

"That's for you to decide, Ogilvy," said Franks. "We've brought the machine here. You take over as the senior on the ground. We all obey orders."

"Very well," I replied. "Jefferson will remain with the machine. It is essential to have an untired pilot to fly her off, if necessary. Whatever happens, the bus must remain in our hands. It's our only chance of ever getting home again."

"You think we may be interfered with, then?" queried Jefferson.

"It is just possible that our motor-cyclist friend has got a message through to his Government," I said, "and that the Government has telegraphed to its local commissary. We must allow for the eventuality."

"Certainly," agreed Paul. "They might use their wireless."

"Well," I went on, "Jefferson remains in the cockpit, and covers us as well as he can with the machine-gun. If he is seriously attacked, he is to remember that the aeroplane is his first consideration. The rest of us—Franks, Paul, and I—will dig up the chest. Do you approve?"

"Carried unanimously," said Franks.

FIVE minutes later the three of us, bearing a pick-axe and a couple of spades, and each with an automatic pistol in his right-hand pocket, slipped cautiously from the darkened aeroplane into the blackness of the night. Franks held a phosphorescent compass to direct our course on the bearings he had taken, and, close together, without a sound, we stumbled through the inky obscurity towards a mass of trees sombre against the faint moonless luminosity of the sky.

We entered the grove of trees, and the hushed silence was suddenly broken by the squawk of a frightened bird. A moment later young Paul began to use his torch cautiously, flashing it for a brief instant on the tree trunks. Evidently he recognized some secret mark, for he turned off at a slight tangent.

"This way," he whispered. I heard him counting to himself. He stopped. "Here!"

There was no help for it now. We had perforce to switch on our torches to see what we were about. I could only hope that in this dark recess of the wood the light would be masked by the trees. We laid our torches on the ground, focusing their beams on the spot that Paul indicated. I attacked it vigorously with my pick-axe, and the other two feverishly shovelled out the earth I loosened. A few minutes and my pick clanged upon hard iron. A few minutes more and we had cleared the sides of the chest and lifted it to the edge of the hole.

Franks and I raised it by its handles—it was appallingly heavy—and, leaving our tools behind us, commenced to stagger with it through the wood.

We had not gone half-a-dozen steps when suddenly there was a loud crackling of twigs all round us, and something leaped out of the blackness upon me and bore me to the ground. Almost before my consciousness realized the situation, I found myself rolling upon dead leaves in a fierce, life-and-death struggle with a powerful man. Instinctively I had snatched out my pistol, but it was impossible to shoot in the confused *mêlée* I heard crashing and shouting around me. I got one hand on my adversary's throat, and with the other smashed savagely at his soft face with the heavy weapon. Other people were shooting, however. Half-a-dozen shots stabbed the darkness with spurts of flame as I released myself from the relaxed grasp of my adversary and rose to my feet. Where were the others? I had lost touch with them. There was a trampling and crashing, punctuated by sharp detonations, farther away through the wood. Before I could orientate myself, define the danger, a couple at least of dark figures flung themselves upon me.

This time I realized my case was hopeless. My pistol was struck from my grasp, and, struggle as I might, I felt myself being steadily overborne by the fierce pressure of the bodies that grappled with me. Suddenly there was a sharp cry near at hand. "Major Ogilvy!" A beam of light flashed out from a torch, a pistol cracked sharply twice, thrice. My opponents fell from me. It was Paul!

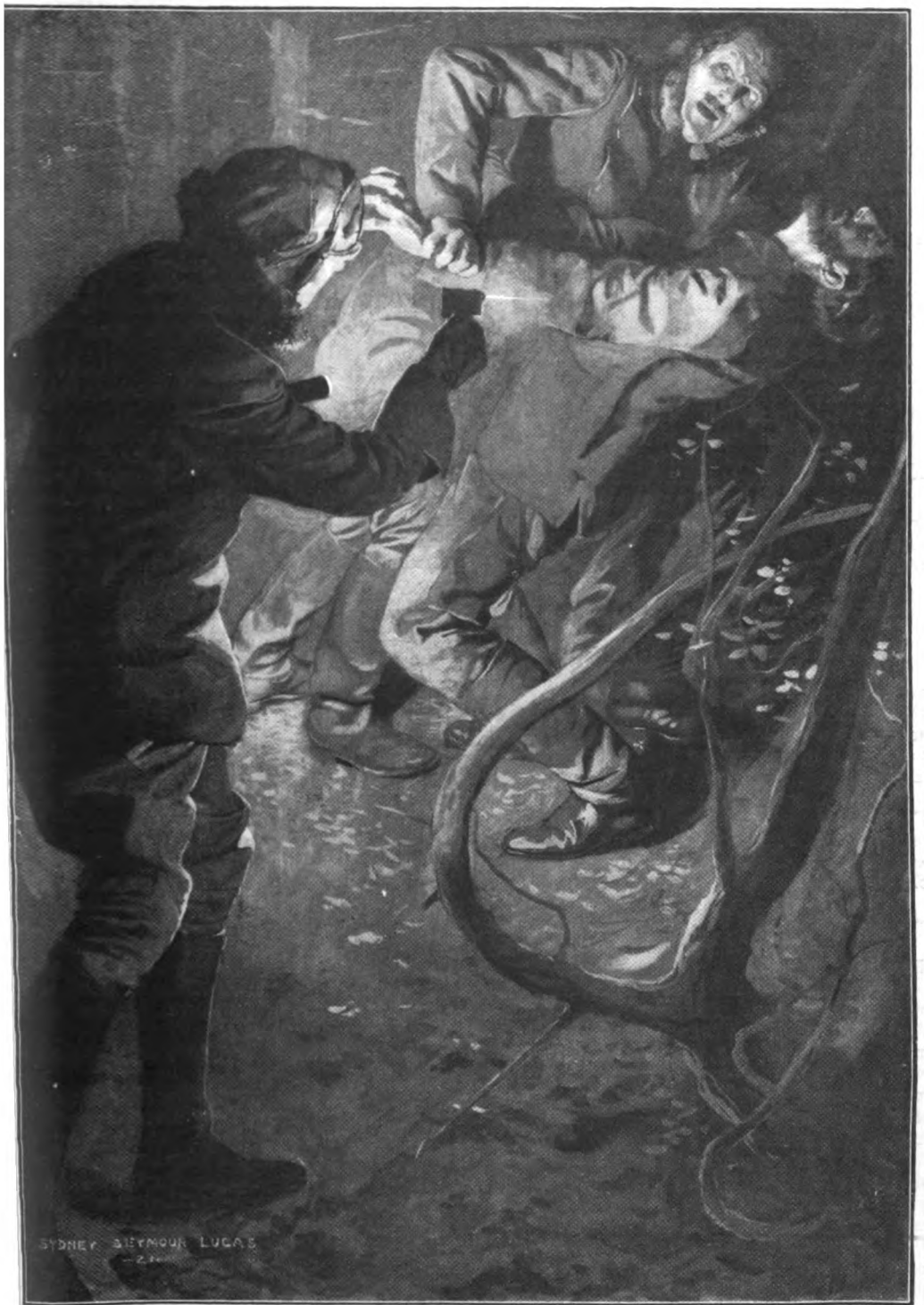
We had but a moment for recognition, and then we were both felled headlong from behind. A heavy body sat upon mine, strong hands searched for my wrists. Then the man upon me lifted himself, dealt me a kick which I interpreted as an invitation to rise. I staggered to my feet, with my hands bound tight behind me, looked around in the radiance of an electric torch switched on by someone. Paul stood likewise erect, similarly trussed with a long cord. Where was Franks? There was no sign of him in the evil-looking crowd I dimly discerned beyond the immediate radius of the light.

The next instant a run of rapidly-reiterated detonations, at a little distance, shattered the silence of the wood. Sharp rifle-cracks answered it in a ragged volley, were whelmed again in the quick regularly-spaced reports of the machine-gun. There was a confused shouting away beyond the trees, more uneven rifle-cracks, another sharp burst from the machine-gun—and then a familiar, deep-toned, droning roar started into life, passed upward and away, diminished to a faintly-heard continuance.

It was the aeroplane—gone!

We had no leisure to dwell upon this abandonment. An individual who was in authority uttered a sharp command. A couple of our captors seized me by neck and arms and marched me forward. Another couple dealt similarly with young Paul. We made our way through the obstacles of the wood illuminated by the electric-torch held by the leader. I noticed that our precious chest was borne ahead between two ruffians with rifles slung across their backs.

We emerged from the wood into the comparative clarity of the open space now empty of our aeroplane. We could not even hear the distant drone of its engine. Had Franks regained the machine before she



"Struggle as I might, I felt myself being steadily overborne. Suddenly a beam of light flashed out from a torch, a pistol cracked sharply. It was Paul!"

rose into that dark night sky, or was he yet lying in the gloomy wood we left behind us? I shrank from imagination of the latter alternative. The next moment my attention was claimed by a bright light shining upwards into the blackness from the ruined walls of the derelict mansion some little distance away. Our captors had evidently established their headquarters there, for they pushed us roughly towards it.

We entered into a ruined, fire-blackened porch, passing beyond it into a long narrow hall. At the farther end, illuminated by several flaring army-pattern acetylene lamps, placed upon *débris* fallen from the roof, was a group of men. One of them, in military uniform, and evidently the superior, sat on a rubble-heap near the end wall. The others, a wild-looking, repulsive lot, stood in a half-circle about him. All were armed to the teeth. A sudden command from the seated officer halted us about half-a-dozen paces away from this unpleasant crowd.

The chest we had dug up was deposited in front of the leader. He was quite young still, but his face was haggard, stamped with the sign-mark of dissolute life. Yet, vicious though he looked, there was a hint of superiority of race in this young man which, I thought, distinguished him from the coarse brutes who formed his bodyguard. Superior or not, I disliked him vehemently on sight. An evil smile of triumph twisted the mouth under the small black moustache as he glanced at the chest, and then he looked up to us, turned his eyes, glittering in the acetylene glare, on to me.

"*Votre nom?*" he demanded, sharply, in French, presumably our only mutual medium of communication. The abruptly-curt insolence of the man was reminiscent of an old-time Prussian officer.

"Ogilvy," I replied.

"*Qualités?*"

"English—private person," I answered, likewise in French.

"*Bien!*" The evil smile flickered again over his features. He turned to young Paul, and my eyes followed his glance. To my surprise the boy was confronting him with a smile of—surely!—contemptuous recognition. My surprise was succeeded by sheer bewilderment as the officer addressed him, still in French.

"As for you, *mademoiselle*"—he emphasized the word—"there is no need to ask your name. We know each other well enough."

Mademoiselle! The memory of the coat buttoned on the wrong side; of the knees, habituated to skirts, which had opened instead of closing to catch my cigarette-case; of a hundred petty details, unnoticed at the time, but now significant, flashed into my mind. Paul—Paul was a girl! My heart seemed to stop in my body.

The youthful figure at my side only smiled scornfully.

"Yes—we know each other well enough, Michael Alexandrovitch." It was a girl's voice, unmistakably—had never, of course, been anything but a girl's voice. She turned her handsome face towards me, said in French that he understood, with deliberate insult: "This is the only member of our family of whom we have ever been ashamed, *mon ami*."

A spasm of anger contracted his features.

"Your family will soon cease to feel that shame." There was something feline in the way he almost spat the words at her. "You are the last of them!"

"Yes," she replied, coolly; "thanks to you, Michael Alexandrovitch, I am the last of them."

His hand moved towards the pistol in his belt, as though in an impulse to shoot her on the spot. I stood, arms bound behind my back, in an agony of impotence, utterly unable to protect her. Had she not dashed back to help me in the wood—the thought seared me like a lightning-flash—she might have got away, as Franks perhaps had done, to the aeroplane.

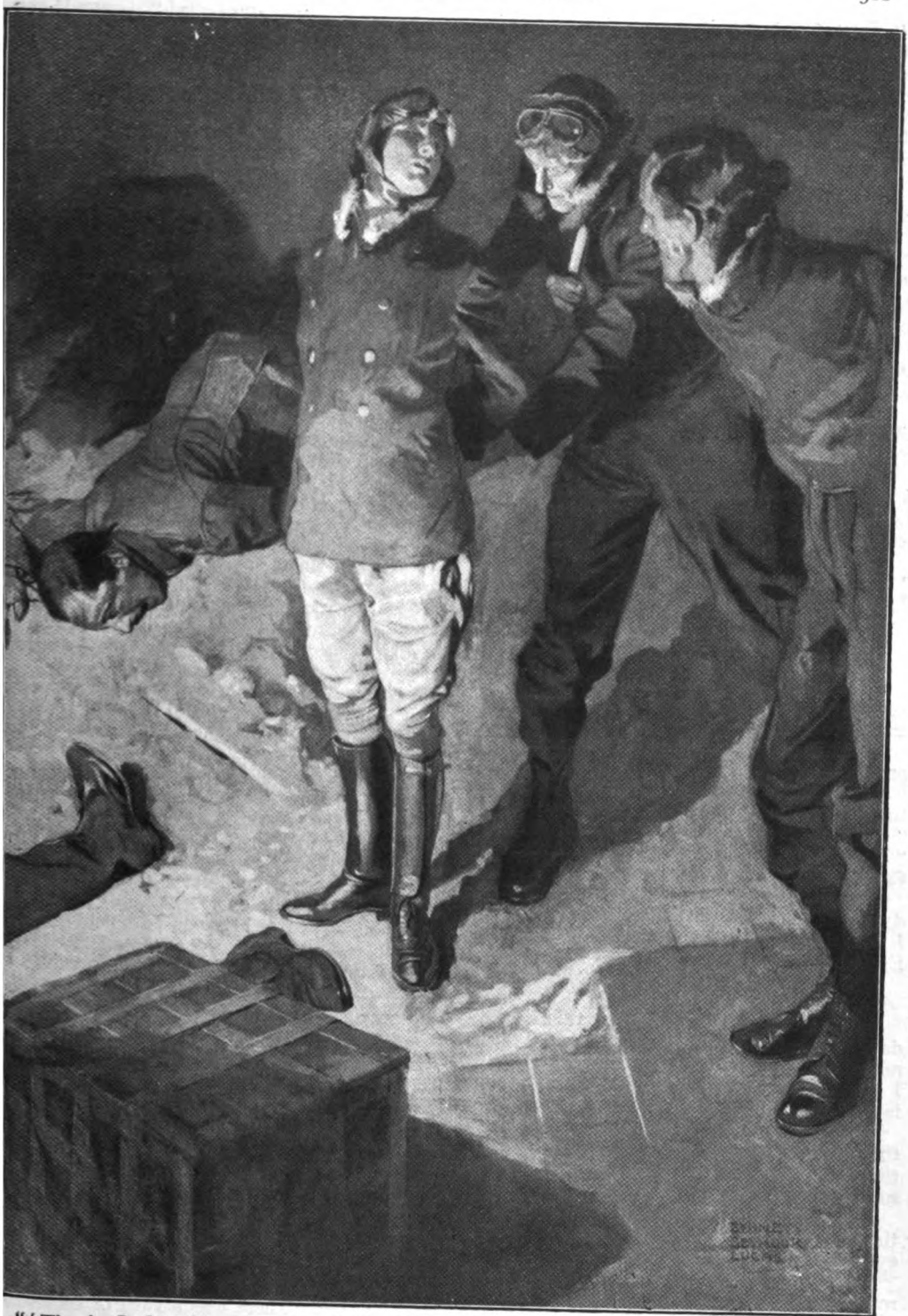
WHATEVER the officer's intention, he was suddenly arrested. From overhead came a familiar, droning roar, momentarily louder. Instinctively I looked up, saw a sky of twinkling stars in the gap between the roofless walls. The roar increased, filled our ears with its deafening vehemence, almost directly above. I saw some vague, dark body flit in a brief occultation of the twinkling stars for the instant in which the roar swelled to its maximum before again diminishing. The officer uttered an angry order. The majority of the men in that roofless hall dashed out into the night. Rifleshot after rifleshot, in wild irregularity of coincident detonations, re-echoed from the cavernous walls. Then again there was silence. Not even the sound of the aeroplane broke the stillness.

The officer, reassured, turned once more to us.

"I am obliged to you, Vera Dmitrievna," he said, with a sneering cynicism for which I could have killed him, "for having so kindly indicated the whereabouts of our family property." He touched the chest with his foot as he emphasized the "our." "I was in need of my share of it."

"It is little you will get," she taunted him. "The Soviet will see to that."

"On the contrary," he replied, coolly, "the Central Soviet will see that I do get it. We are very good friends, the Government and I."



"'Thank God! Here you are!' Franks cried. In an instant he had whipped out a knife and slashed us free."

"They are welcome to your friendship, Michael Alexandrovitch," she said, her lip curling. "It never brought good to anyone."

"*Assez!*" he shouted at her in sudden exasperation. "No more of this chatter! The Extraordinary Commission will deal with you to-morrow—and with you also, my fine Englishman!"

HIS eyes blazed round at me, and the girl also turned towards me for a quick glance. I saw an extraordinary change of expression come over her face in the instant that her eyes met mine, and then she switched round again to her unpleasant relative.

"Michael Alexandrovitch!" There was an altogether new note of terrified appeal in her voice.

He looked at her, malevolent and supercilious.

"Well?" he queried.

"Michael Alexandrovitch! About myself I do not mind, but this Englishman——! Let him go! Do what you like to me—but let him go!"

"Nonsense!" I interjected, in English. "I share whatever happens to you! What do you take me for?"

She ignored me.

"Michael Alexandrovitch! Let him go—and I will die forgiving you!"

He smiled inscrutably. I interposed, before another word could be uttered, addressing myself to him.

"Monsieur!" I began, in French. "I protest——"

"Silence!" he yelled at me. Then he turned to the girl I had known as Paul. "Continue, mademoiselle!' he said, blandly. "Your forgiveness is scarcely sufficient. Can you offer nothing more?"

"All I have in England!" she suggested, desperately. "It is much—very much! I will sign it all to you if you will let this Englishman go."

"He is your lover, I suppose?" he sneered.

I writhed in my bonds.

"I met this lady for the first time yesterday," I exclaimed, furiously, ' and I have no relationship with her in any way! But I demand, as her companion, to share her fate!"

"Silence, you!" he shouted at me, and then turned once more to the girl. "Continue, mademoiselle!" he said, a cynical smile about his lips.

But she was looking upon me, and I thought I had never seen such wonderful eyes as those which met my gaze.

"Was it really—only yesterday?" she murmured, in English. Her face flooded with sudden colour. An altogether peculiar emotion gripped me. The blood surged in my head. My heart galloped.

"Continue, mademoiselle!" urged the officer, insistently.

She faced him.

"I have nothing more to offer."

He smiled again.

"I think you have, Vera Dmitrievna," he said, a subtle significance in his tone. "Do you remember the last time we met—in Paris?"

"I do," she replied. Her voice checked curiously.

"You refused me then. Will you refuse me now?" The man's face seemed to me Satanic.

She stood silent.

"Vera!" I exclaimed. "Vera!—if that is your name—Vera, I appeal to you—let no thought of me influence you! I would rather die a thousand times than that you should owe anything to this scoundrel!"

She stood silent, immensely remote from me it seemed, and yet subtly interwoven with the roots of me.

"Will you refuse me now?" repeated the young man, grimly triumphant.

She spoke suddenly, in that voice which sent a thrill through me.

"No," she said, "I will not refuse you. If you give this Englishman a safe-conduct, properly counter-signed, out of the country, I will marry you—a civil marriage—as you wished."

"He shall have it!" interjected the young man, his vicious eyes gleaming.

"On one condition," she went on.

"And that is?"

"That in one month's time you denounce me as a counter-revolutionary to the Extraordinary Commission! But," she added, with subtle malice, "I expect you will do that in any case."

"To the Extraordinary Commission!" he echoed, incredulously.

"It is a death I prefer to suicide," she elucidated.

"Vera——!" I began, in futile protest.

"Accepted!" he cried. "I sell you his life——"

The words stilled on his tongue. Once more we heard the familiar deep-toned drone of our machine, drawing rapidly nearer and nearer above. It was evidently flying very low. The roar of the engine swelled to a terrifying violence, so close it seemed to swoop upon us. Michael Alexandrovitch looked up, in sudden alarm, towards the sound.

There was a quick run of reports, half heard in that devastating roar, from overhead. I saw Michael Alexandrovitch fling up his arms, the men around him collapse and tumble. There was a rush of survivors towards the door, a panicked exit. We alone were left upon our feet.

We heard the aeroplane swing round, roar towards us again, its machine-gun crackling furiously above the scattered rifle-shots which replied. Up and down it went for yet several turns, like a destroying angel in the night, the machine-gun firing in vicious sudden bursts. Then, suddenly, there was silence.

FOR a moment or two we stood still, listening. Then I glanced at the boylike girl beside me, remembered our bonds. We must get free, at all costs, while we had the opportunity. With the awkwardness of hands bound behind one's back I moved across to where an acetylene lamp flared beside the dead body of Michael Alexandrovitch. Then, backing upon it, I tried—despite the agony of the flame—to burn through the cords which held my wrists.

I was yet at my first ineffectual attempt when Franks dashed into the ruined hall with a joyous shout.

"Thank God! Here you are!" he cried. In an instant he had whipped out a knife and slashed us free.

I put out an arm to the girl. She had gone deathly white, tottered as I supported her towards the door.

"What's the matter with Mr. Paul?" said Franks. "Don't forget the chest, you boys!"

"Mr. Paul's all right," I replied. "Drag the chest over here, and I'll give you a hand with it."

Between us, one of my arms still holding up "Mr. Paul," we carried our treasure out into the night.

"Sorry we kept you waiting so long," said Franks, as we stumbled through the darkness. "One of those fellows hit the petrol tank the first time we came over, and we had to retire for repairs. But we made up for it when we came back!"

"My congratulations on a first-rate bit of shooting," said I.

"Pooh!" he replied. "Compared to an air-fight with a Hun it was like potting a sitting bird." He laughed. "But it was a good thing you were a yard or two away from the target."

The shadowy silhouette of our machine defined itself in the darkness. We scrambled up the ladder into the interior, lifted up our precious chest, and stowed it.

"All aboard?" cried Jefferson's cheery voice from the cockpit.

"All aboard!" answered Franks, going forward to him.

The engine roared suddenly. The aeroplane bumped slightly, zoomed up towards the stars. I cared nothing for all the constellations of heaven. In the saloon I was looking into other luminaries.

"Until we get back," she said, shyly, into my ear, "remember that I am still Mr. Paul."

ACROSTICS.

OUR nineteenth series of acrostics begins with No. 101, printed below, and will run for four months. Prizes to the value of twelve guineas are offered.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 101.

SOLVERS and readers, *one* and *two*
This Christmastide we wish to you.

1. His ship with this the sailor guides.
2. Sensation Scottish loch provides.
3. Who picked a peck? First name is here;
4. Now let his second name appear.
5. A British tribe when Rome held sway.
6. A character in Shakespeare's play.
7. River in France must lose its head·
8. And here its tail must go instead.
9. Your daughter's brother and his net
   In fourteen lines of verse are met.

PAX.

Answers to No. 101 *must reach the Acrostic Editor,* THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, not later than by the first post on December* 10*th.*

One alternative answer may be sent to each light. At the foot every solver should write his pseudonym, consisting of one word.

ANSWER TO No. 100.

'Tis the same number, though two words are here,
Marking a certain stage in our career.

1. Telling of one, of whom the truth this is:
   His is one part, while many parts are his.
2. A poet's word refers to Gentile might.
   But one must rearrange to get it right.
3. Take war-famed hill: two-thirds a king will show;
   This tells the race he governed, years ago.
4. Milliner's daughter—this her married name—
   Using a man's name earned a meed of fame.
5. Cardinal, Duke, through many a change and chance
   Sternly controlled the destinies of France.
6. To find the place, think of a woman wise,
   A broken law, a monarch in disguise.
7. Where four comes after eight, and later three,
   And Whitsuntide comes after Trinity.

PAX.

1.	H	istrioni	C
2.	U	nsmot	E
3.	N	umidia	N
4.	D	udevan	T
5.	R	ichelie	U
6.	E	ndo	R
7.	D	ictionar	Y

NOTES.—Light 1. Part of the word; many theatrical parts. 2. Byron, The Destruction of Sennacherib. Anagram, one must. 3. Majuba Hill, Juba, king in the time of Cæsar. 4. George Sand. 6. Saul and the witch.

Solvers are requested to send, with their answers to No. 101, their real names and addresses also. These should be written at the back of their solutions, except in the case of postcards.

The third series of six literary acrostics, founded entirely on quotations, is now ready, price half a crown. Prizes to the value of six pounds are offered. Copies can be obtained from A. E., The Gables, Twyford, Winchester.

THE PUZZLE CRANKS' SYMPOSIUM

by

HENRY E. DUDENEY

A SMALL group of members of the Society for the Solving of Entertaining Problems, known among their friends as the "Puzzle Cranks," accepted the Christmas invitation of Colonel Fanfare, one of their number, to spend an evening at his house at Hampstead. They were asked to meet Professor Boomstein, the famous Scotch author of a new theory of Divisibility, about which everybody was talking. Everybody, of course, knows that the Professor has shown that Divisibility, in terms of Visibility, depends wholly on Ability; that 2 and 2 may make anything up to 17, the summation being entirely dependent on the sobriety of the "body of reference"; that a square root planted in a "field of gravitation" results in an infinite product; that Sirius moves not only in the direction of its inclination, but also contrary to its inclination, and therefore in two opposite directions at the same time; and so on. His startling discoveries are too recondite and profound for ordinary people, and mathematicians only pretend to comprehend them. Therefore Boomstein (or McBloomer before he changed his name) stands alone, on a pinnacle so to speak, the admired of all beholders

The other members of the party were people of ordinary intelligence, like ourselves, and all fond of good puzzles, in the solving of which they were pretty expert. Yet on this occasion they "unbent" considerably, and, after a good dinner, dropped into an informal discussion of a variety of entertaining posers.

REDUCTIONS IN PRICE.

"I have often been mystified," said Dr. Telscombe, "at the startling reductions some people make in their prices, and wondered on what principle they went to work. For example, a man offered me a motor car two years ago for £512; a year later his price was £320: a little while after that he asked a level £200; and last week he was willing to sell it for £125. The next time he reduces his price I shall buy. At what price shall I purchase the car if he makes a consistent reduction?"

SOME WORD PUZZLES.

Mr. Wingleford, another guest, had a distinct fondness for word puzzles. Ordinarily the members of the Society had a disdain for these, but, like blind man's buff and the dance of Roger de Coverley, they were thought admissible at Yuletide.

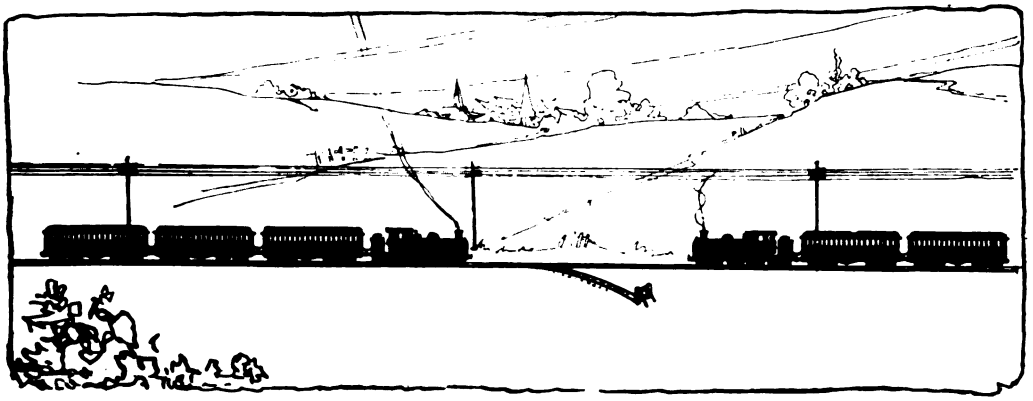
"Can you tell me what word this is?" asked Wingleford. "If you take away the first letter, I murder; if you take away two, I may die, unless my whole should save me."

It did not give much difficulty, nor did they find it hard to make one word out of the letters, GREAT HELP, which he also proposed, but they were all defeated by this: "Take away my first letter and I remained unchanged; take away my second letter and I remain unchanged; take away my third letter and I remain unchanged; take away all my letters and still I remain exactly the same."

THE CIRCULATING MOTOR CAR.

Colonel Fanfare himself then propounded the following little problem. He said that a motor car was running on a circular track with the result that the outside wheels were going twice as fast as the inside ones. What was the length of the circumference described by the outer wheels? He added that the wheels were five feet apart on the axletree.

Professor Boomstein remarked that it depended on the circumference of the wheels, and that a circle, or any other line, may be regarded as a succession of points, and, since a point has no dimension, neither can a circle have any length, therefore, he said, the answer is indeterminate. Yet a very good approximate solution was arrived at.

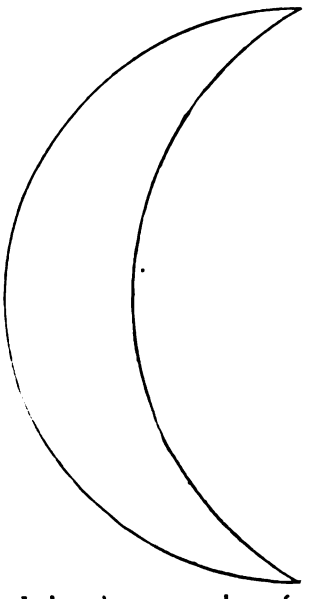


How are these two trains to pass one another and proceed with their engines in front?

RAILWAY SHUNTING.

"Talking of wheels and tracks," said Mr. Grigsby, "reminds me of a novel version of an old railway puzzle that was given to me last week by a ticket collector. I happened to ask him why he punched a hole in my ticket, and his answer, 'To let you through,' was so good that I asked him if he had any other conundrums. Then he gave me this":—

How are the two trains in our illustration to pass one another, and proceed with their engines in front? The small side-track is only large enough to hold one engine or one carriage at a time, and no tricks, such as ropes and flying-switches, are allowed. Every reversal—that is, change of direction—of an engine is counted as a move in the solution, and he wanted to know what is the smallest number of moves necessary.



In how large a number of pieces can this crescent moon be cut with five straight cuts of the knife?

Boomstein insisted that it all depended on the intelligence of the engine-drivers, which was an unknown factor. But they tried it with counters, and found the correct solution.

DISSECTING THE MOON

"I was amused the other day," said Mr. Watkins, "on reading the expression in the lines of a very minor poet, 'the fleecy clouds behind the moon.'"

"But what is wrong with it?" asked Dr. Telscombe. "If the moon has atmosphere and moisture, as I believe, there may well be clouds on its farther side."

"But they would not be visible to the poet, as he said."

"Let me remind you again," said Boomstein, "that visibility depends on ability. I have known men with more remarkable powers of vision than this poet, after a good dinner. Remember, *in vino veritas*, and even an hallucination is just as true as anything else—sometimes truer."

"I will not venture to argue with the Professor," said Watkins, with becoming modesty, "so we will pass on. I was going to ask: In how large a number of pieces might the moon be cut with five straight cuts of the knife?"

"Surely we all know the rule for that," Colonel Fanfare insisted. "A circle can be cut into sixteen parts by five straight cuts."

"But I am not considering a circle, but the moon in crescent form." Mr. Watkins drew a crescent like that in our illustration, and it gave them some little trouble to determine the answer. Of course, the pieces may not be piled or shifted after a cut. Draw your five straight lines so as to get as many parts as possible.

A POLISH GAMBLE.

"As you know, gentlemen," said Sir Henry Wobblestaff, "I have just returned from Poland, and I was not very favourably impressed by the people that I happened to come in contact with there. In fact, I proved conclusively the truth of the old rule that forty Poles make one rude. However, I was on very friendly terms with two Polish gentlemen, Baron von Piffpoff and Count de Sillisol. The night before I left we had a card gamble, and the results of the play were interesting. At the start we all put our ready money (English money) on the table. I lost the first game, in consequence of which the Baron and the Count each doubled their money. The Baron and I scored the second game, and each doubled our assets. Then the Count and I won the third game, which resulted in each of us doubling our holdings. It was then observed that each player had won twice and lost once, while each was left with exactly the same money, although I had lost £100. How much money did we each start play with?"

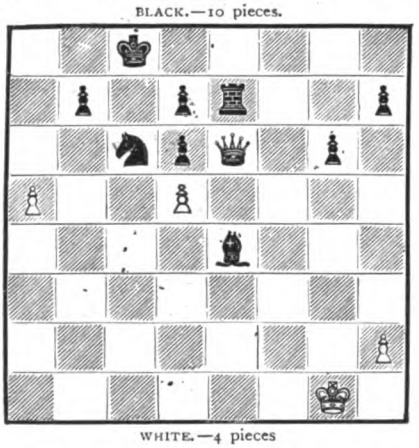
Though they all solved this pretty readily, they agreed that it was interesting.

PAWNS AGAINST PIECES.

Mr. Rokewynn, who was perhaps the most expert chess authority in the Society, seeing a board on a side table, brought it forward and asked the company if any of them had ever played the old game of "Pawns against Pieces." You start by removing from the

board all White's pieces except the king and the eight pawns, leaving Black his sixteen pieces intact. White plays first, and has two moves for every single move of Black. The play is just as in the ordinary game, except that White can go into check on his first move so long as he gets out of it on the second, and the White king can take a piece protected by the opponent king if he retreats on the second move. The old books

BLACK.—10 pieces.



WHITE.—4 pieces

regard it as a certain win for White, but recent analysis shows that it is a remarkably even game between two expert players.

Rokewynn played one game with Dr. Telscombe, and our diagram shows a position arrived at. White, having the move, wins easily, but only if you play correctly his first two pairs of moves. What are they? It will serve as an illustration of the possibilities of the game. The reader is strongly advised to try his hand at this very interesting variation of chess.

BRUIN GOES SHOPPING

"May I put to the company a little riddle?" asked Mr. Rochester Cobb, who was not addicted to this class of poser, it is only fair to say: "A bear, taking a stroll through a town, entered a milliner's shop. What did he want?"

After some discussion as to the habits of bears and their domestic requirements, nobody could guess what such an animal could want in a milliner's shop. But they were all quite satisfied with Mr. Cobb's answer.

A CURIOUS LEGACY.

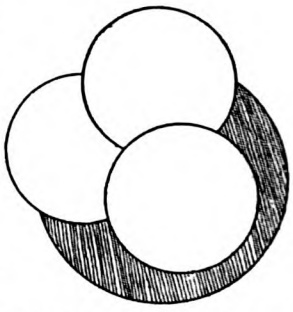
Mr. Grigsby had a second puzzle to his credit. He said a man left a legacy of £1,000 to three relatives and their wives The wives received together £396. Jane received £10 more than Catherine, and Mary received £10 more than Jane. John Smith was given just as much as his wife, Henry Snooks got half as much again as his wife, and Tom Crowe received twice as much as his wife. What was the Christian name of each man's wife?

"I assumed," said Rokewynn, "that you were going to ask us how much money each person received."

"No; that is merely introductory matter," Grigsby explained. "The real point of interest is to pair off those married couples correctly."

THE CIRCLE AND DISCS.

The last puzzle of the evening was introduced by the host himself, and it certainly kept them occupied up to the time of their departure. He said that during a recent visit to a fair he saw a man with a table on the oil-cloth covering of which was painted a large red circle, and he invited the public to cover this circle entirely with five tin discs which he provided, and offered a substantial prize to anybody who was successful. The circular discs were all of the same size, and each, of course, smaller than the red circle. The diagram, where three discs are shown placed, will make everything clear.



"He showed us that it was 'quite easy when you know how' by covering up the circle himself without any apparent difficulty," said the Colonel, "but I tried over and over again and failed every time, as did everybody else whom I saw make the attempt. I should explain that it was a condition that when once you had placed any disc you were not allowed to shift it, otherwise, by sliding them about after they had been placed, it might be tolerably easy to do."

Professor Boomstein explained in his own distinguished manner that the invisibility of the red would depend on the degree of transparency of the tin discs, and that a solution would only be possible if the discs were sufficiently large.

"That brings us to the point I want you to consider, gentlemen. Let us assume that the red circle is six inches in diameter. Now, what is the smallest possible diameter for the five discs in order to make a solution possible?"

They settled down and worked hard at this little problem, but it is to be regretted that they arrived at no solution. Previous to this meeting several perplexed correspondents had written to me about the same thing, which they had themselves seen at fairs, and I will give my own solution in due course. Supposing the red circle is six inches in diameter, as the Colonel said, what is the smallest possible diameter (say, to the nearest half-inch) for the five discs that will completely cover it?

(The solutions to the above puzzles, together with some new "Perplexities," will be given in our next issue.)

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

575.—FOX AND GEES.

THE geese should always win, though, on occasion, a little care and judgment are required. It is quite an interesting and instructive little puzzle game for young folk.

576.—THE TWO TRAINS.

IN 5 sec. both trains (together) go 600ft., or $81\frac{8}{11}$ miles per hour. In 15 sec. the faster train gains 600ft., or $27\frac{3}{11}$ miles per hour. From this we get $54\frac{5}{11}$ miles per hour as the rate of the faster train; and it is clear that $27\frac{3}{11}$ miles per hour is the rate of the other.

577.—"SIMPLE" ARITHMETIC.

THEIR ages were respectively 64 and 20.

578.—A CHARADE.

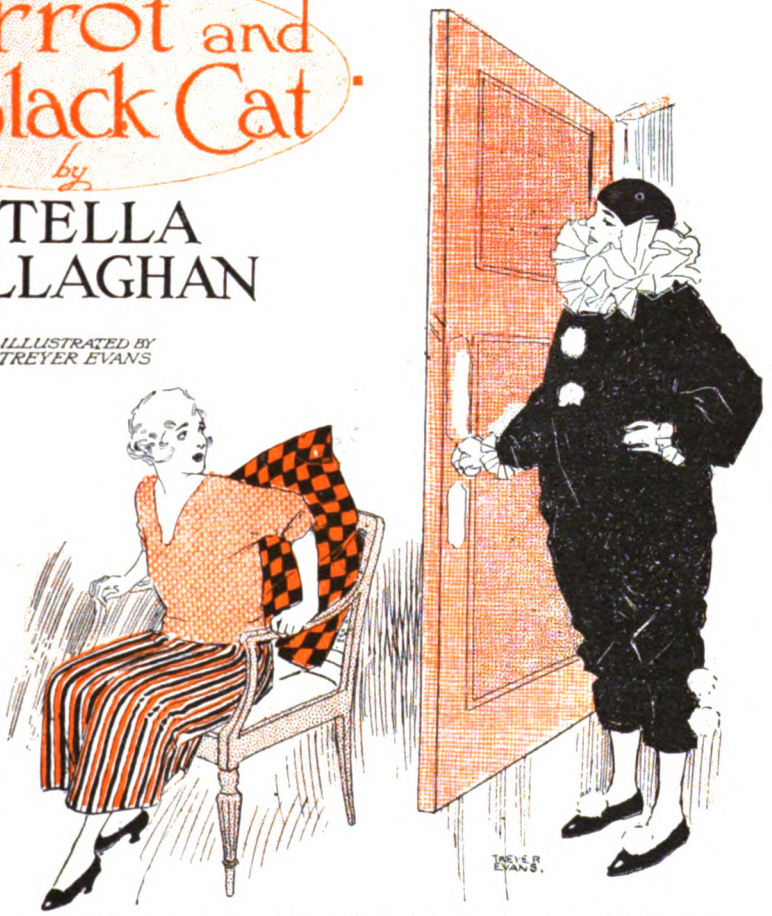
THE word is RAM-ROD.

Pierrot and the Black Cat

by

STELLA CALLAGHAN

ILLUSTRATED BY TREYER EVANS



"'Have you,' asked the Black Pierrot, 'such a thing as a Black Cat?'"

I.

SHE sat by the gas-fire in her tiny sitting-room and stared at the Black Cat that stood upon the mantelpiece.

The Black Cat stared back at her with its wise, far-seeing smile.

The Black Cat had on it, written in letters of red, "Good Luck."

Not an object of art, nor of any intrinsic value, but at the moment exceedingly noticeable—mainly because, beside two chairs and a table and a rug, it was almost the only thing in the room except herself. Everything else had gone—one way and another.

She had practically nothing left but the Black Cat and an indomitable sense of humour—and these were not obviously marketable, or no doubt they would have gone too. Her rent was paid till the end of the quarter, or she would not have had her two little rooms. In short, she was at the lowest ebb of the financial tide—one is apt to be when one has been three months out of a permanent job.

So, humorously, calmly, and without despair, but with a blank feeling of exasperation, she sat and stared at the Black Cat—symbol, sardonically enough, of Good Luck.

Her thoughts, such as they were, were on the Black Cat, centring round it. The incident that happened next seemed, therefore, at the moment, in her semi-dreamy state, to be nothing out of the ordinary, amazing as it was.

There was a sudden tap, sharp and decisive and somehow rather gay, on her door.

"Come in," she said, mechanically, without thinking. No one ever tapped at her door these days unless it was the landlady for the rent, and that she knew was paid. She had not time to wonder, hardly time to turn her head, before she saw, standing at the door, a young man dressed as a pierrot, with ruffle and cap complete, in jet black. She merely looked at him with inquiring eyes that had never lost their humour. And his question, of course, chimed in perfectly with her thoughts, since it all happened in a second.

"Have you," asked the Black Pierrot, in a charming matter-of-fact voice, "such a thing as a Black Cat?"

She glanced at the mantelpiece.

"I have," she answered, coolly and pleasantly. "It is almost the only thing I have got."

"Would you be so very kind? I have mislaid mine, and it is one of my essential properties."

"It would be, of course," she said, surveying him critically. He came well through that survey, for he was a personable young man, tall and well put together, and his pierrot's suit was not one of those loose, ready-made, hired-for-the-evening sort of pierrots' suits, but one that fitted with ease and comfort, as though he had obviously worn it all his life. There was the right air with it, too, and the kind of humorous and whimsical face that should belong to Pierrot himself.

"And I understand you want to borrow mine?" she continued.

"That is—if you would be so very kind."

She stretched out her hand and took her cat from the mantelpiece, without getting up from her low chair, and held it out to him.

"With pleasure," she said, formally, with much the same air as one might give the conductor one's fare on a bus.

Pierrot came a step forward—all that was needed in the tiny room—and with both hands touching his forehead in the approved pierrot manner made her a low bow.

"My felicitations, mademoiselle—it was indeed perfectly done. With the deepest gratitude I accept. I have, however, one more, a very urgent request to make."

"Yes?" she queried.

Pierrot knelt on one knee before her.

She still did not turn a hair, neither alarm nor interest showed on her face—in which she showed herself perfectly right, for his next words, earnest as they were, gave no Mrs. Grundy cause for anxiety.

"On my shoulder, mademoiselle, you will find an attachment, into which my Black Cat should have slipped, so that it will perch there in perfect safety. If I might ask you to be so kind as to adjust it to the priceless animal you are giving so unquestioningly into my keeping——"

With quick, deft fingers she fastened her last Unnecessary Possession to his shoulder.

Then Pierrot rose very gravely to his feet, and said somewhat grandiloquently:—

"Your Luck, mademoiselle, will be safe in my keeping until it will be returned to you. Meanwhile, you have my deep gratitude in its place."

With that, and another pierrot salute, the strange young man had gone. She heard the door close softly and quick, light steps run down a flight or two of the big Bloomsbury house. With their passing, silence settled again on the little room, broken only by the faint hissing of the gas-fire.

AND, suddenly, the room felt exceedingly lonely. Her eyes went to the now empty mantelpiece. Of course—it was because the Black Cat had gone. That gave the loneliness, of course. Then, in spite of herself, as it were, her thoughts went over the absurd little interruption.

A rather nice pierrot. Pierrot himself—some fragment out of some world that was not here. Had the incident been real? She half believed it had not been. When one is very down on one's luck—when the money in one's purse is countable in shillings and not notes—when one does not exactly know when and how it is to be filled again—strange things might very easily happen. When one is a little hungry, also, and knows there are only two sausages and half a loaf of bread in one's cupboard——

Still, the Black Cat had gone.

Of course it had happened. She shook herself a little. A rather nice, pleasant young man, going out to a fancy-dress ball—with a party—or just one charming girl, who would dance with him the whole night—and they would have supper.

Without any bitterness or envy, but in a sleepy, dreamy way, she thought it was rather rotten that such things would not come her way again—not yet. She had to make good again, after being dismissed from the paper for which she had been doing fashion sketches. Of course, it would be all right again some time—one didn't starve, somebody must take her drawings—one didn't *starve*.

Of course not—she shook herself again slightly. One could always go out as a maid-of-all-work. One would—when there was not even a shilling in a purse. But not till then.

Still, that was not very far off. Unless, of course, some of those sketches that were going the round of the papers stuck somewhere and got paid for—by luck.

"Luck?"

But she had given her Luck away—to Pierrot.

Suddenly, through her dreams, she heard the quick, light step up the stairs again—the tap on the door—her own "Come in." And again the Black Pierrot stood in the doorway.

Was he real?

Anyway, this time he carried something that looked fantastic enough. A large—very large—round black box—a sort of super-milliner's box. She just looked at him inquiringly, the little smile twitching the corners of her mouth in spite of herself. He was such a very attractive Pierrot—real or merely dressed for the part. Her own familiar Black Cat sat on his shoulder and smiled that old wisely inane smile—but—

was she mistaken? There seemed to have come into the familiar smile a distinct new twinkle.

Pierrot, holding the box gingerly away from him, made his bow with the tips of his fingers on his forehead.

"Forgive me, mademoiselle, but I have again come to implore your kindness. I have again mislaid something."

"What now, Pierrot?"

"It is a very important adjunct to my evening—so important that I do not very well see how—without it—there can be an evening at all. I am in despair."

"You seem very careless, Pierrot," she found herself saying; and, do what she would, she could not keep the hint of laughter out of her voice. Pierrot looked so forlorn—so *désolé*. "What is it you have mislaid now?"

"Mademoiselle, I have mislaid—Columbine."

"Oh-h!"

Pierrot's eyes were deprecatingly on the ground.

"It is a misfortune—perhaps—but I assure you it is not altogether carelessness. I had borrowed her—stolen her, one might say—for this evening's ball from Harlequin—and she has vanished—disappeared—broken her promise. That is not *my* carelessness, is it now?"

"I wouldn't like to say, not knowing the other side of the question." The girl—whose name, by the way, was rather charmingly Pauline—answered with reserve: "But might one ask why you expect me to help you find her, and what *is* in that box?"

The Black Pierrot advanced a step into the tiny room and placed the box carefully on the ground. Then he lifted the lid suddenly.

"That, mademoiselle, is all I have of Columbine," he said, pensively.

Pauline glanced in without moving from her chair.

"It certainly doesn't seem very much"—dimpling over with laughter in spite of herself. Inside the round box was what merely seemed to be a large diaphanous black frill.

"The dress for Columbine—for Columbine to dance in at the ball—the loveliest, daintiest, most entrancing figure in the room—so that everyone who sees her will fall in love, and want to dance with her. But she will only be dancing with me—with Pierrot—and she will have supper"—Pierrot's voice lingered rather suddenly on the word 'supper'—"of all the most delightful things to eat, and sparkling wine——"

"What a pity she will not be there!" said Pauline, sympathetically, looking into the gas-fire.

"*If* she is not there. But here is the frock—the essential part of Columbine; for what after all is Columbine without her frock? Just a woman—a charming, capricious woman possibly, but *any* charming, capricious woman. Yet, with this"—he indicated the diaphanous black frill—"she becomes—Columbine."

"In other words, then," said the girl, musingly, "any girl will do for Columbine—provided she wears the frock."

"But how few—how very few *can* wear it!" rejoined Pierrot, fervently.

There was a little silence in the room. The Black Cat still smiled inanely wise from Pierrot's shoulder.

"I hope you will find your Columbine," said the girl, politely, at last.

"I *have* found her, mademoiselle—if only—if only——"

"If only?"

"She will dare to follow—her Luck."

"Then he lifted the lid suddenly. 'That, mademoiselle, is all I have of Columbine.'"

He caressed the Black Cat sitting on his shoulder.

"*Oh!*"

"Think of it—think of the adventure of it! You are sitting here lonely, bored—no supper visible——"

"There are two sausages in the cupboard." broke in the girl, with some indignation.

"Sausages! What are sausages? Excellent things fried for breakfast on a Sunday morning—tolerable, possibly, as a humble adjunct to a mixed grill for supper—not to be despised on mashed potato for lunch—but as a solid means of subsistence they are simply ridiculous. We will dismiss these two sausages, mademoiselle, and think instead—of Columbine"—his voice dropped reverently—"Columbine at the ball. You have only to put on that little frock—and I believe there are all the—er—undergarmentsand appendages to match—and in a few minutes you will be wafted away to a beautiful ballroom, all soft lights, and the most divine band will be playing the most perfect tunes—and later there will be a supper-table, laden with things to eat that will make your two miserable sausages shrivel. Oh, I say"—Pierrot's eloquence broke down suddenly—"do put on the frock and come!"

"The daintiest and most exquisite Columbine that ever graced a ballroom."

It was the breakdown that made Pauline laugh suddenly; and once one has laughed, indignation flies from the room—the laugh is the first sign of capitulation.

"I never heard of anything so preposterous," she murmured, however.

"*Will* you follow your Luck, mademoiselle?"

Pierrot's voice and eyes were eager, diffident, but not anxious. He knew that little trill of involuntary laughter had settled it, even if the girl did not, yet.

When one is young, adventurous, at the end of one's resources, and slightly hungry into the bargain, one's actions are entitled to be slightly more erratic than one's traditions and upbringing would justify. Moreover, I would have you understand, in exoneration of her behaviour, that Pierrot had the right kind of face and bearing and voice—an erratic, ridiculous individual, but trustworthy.

Then her eyes fell again on that diaphanous black frill, and caught a glimpse of delicious things underneath.

Also, it was a real adventure—into the utterly unknown.

Also, the Black Cat smiled at her still from Pierrot's shoulder.

At that moment the gas-fire, which had been dwindling unnoticed, gave a sudden pop and expired.

"My last penny," she murmured, as she leant down and turned off the tap. It was an omen—one could not sit all the evening with a gas-fire that refused to play unless fed with pennies one had not got.

Her mind was made up.

AN hour later she stood again in her little room, transformed into the daintiest and most exquisite Columbine that ever graced a ballroom. The strange round box had been found to contain everything that one could want, the black frill and a skirt had been the merest part of the delicious and dainty outfit. Everything had fitted miraculously—everything but the shoes, and in place of the diamond-buckled French-heeled pair, she was wearing her own black satin sandals that were almost all she had saved of her old dancing equipment. She had somehow not parted with them—it would have been too much like an acknowledgment that her happy affluent days would never come again. Also, her feet were so tiny that she would never have persuaded the old-clothes woman round the corner to give her sixpence for them.

So she stood there, ready, tiptoe with excitement, until she heard Pierrot's light step on the stairs once more, and then she wanted to run away and hide. Instead, she

coolly stood her ground and gave a last complacent pat to her hair. Once more the light tap on the door—her "Come in" a trifle tremulous—and once more the Black Pierrot stood in the doorway. He stood a moment quite still, looking at the dainty, delicious little figure standing bravely under the full glare of the shadeless electric light that hung from the centre of the ceiling. Then he made her the low salute of a true Pierrot.

"The miracle is complete," he said. "I had lost my Luck, and behold, the Black Cat sits on my shoulder! I had lost Columbine, and she stands there, more wonderful than a dream. Come on, the car awaits you at the door."

Then suddenly, as she moved forward, he dropped gracefully on one knee and raised her fingers to his lips.

"For this night and until the early hours of the dawn when I shall again escort you to your door, I vow myself your devoted knight, slave, or what not at your service and command, entirely to do your behests and follow in your train, so to speak, on two conditions."

"Oh, you make conditions, Sir Pierrot?"

"Only from dire necessity. First, that you dance with me, and me only, all night; second, that you wear this mask, and vow in your turn never to remove it without my sanction. If you do"—he rose dramatically and gracefully to his feet—"the spell will be broken—the charm lost—and there *may* be the devil to pay!"

"It is a plot?" said Columbine.

"It is," said Pierrot. "But what is a plot—an intrigue—to Columbine? She is born to it—it is her *métier*—her *raison d'être*—it is the breath of her body and the laughter of her eyes. Are you agreed?"

"You have a wonderful flow of language," murmured Columbine; "and, anyway, I simply can't take this frock off without going out in it."

"You have the true soul of adventure," said Pierrot, and with reverent and neat fingers fastened the dainty lace mask over her head. "I, too, will be masked," he added; "but I must first find our way down these confoundedly dark stairs. Give me your hand."

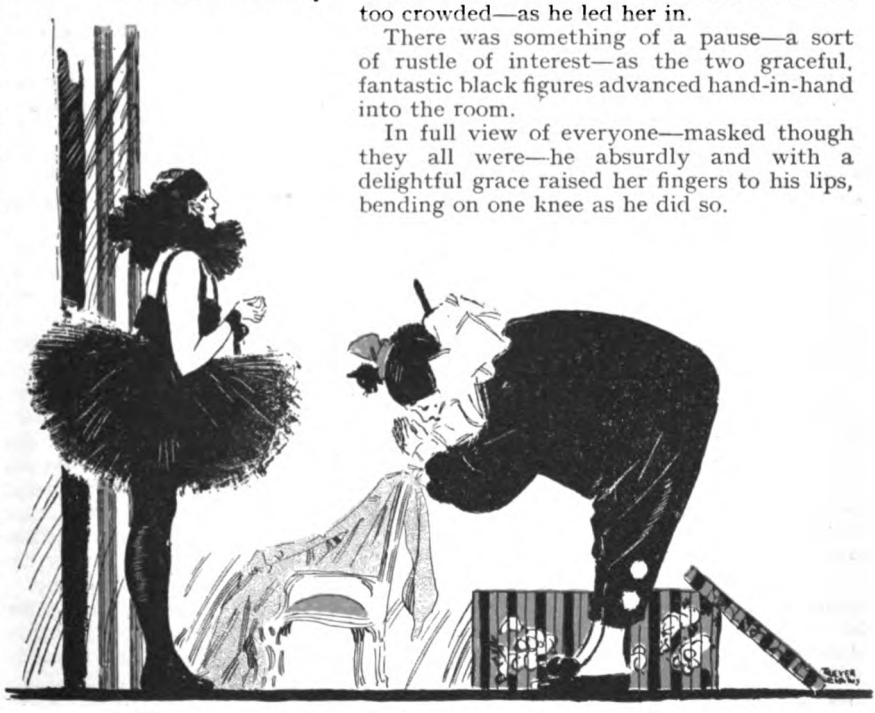
They switched out the light and hand-in-hand made their way down through the tall silent house to the front door. The adventure began.

II.

AT the discovery that it was not in a public room but a large and exquisite private house that the ball was being held, it was all Columbine's sense of adventure could do to prevent her twisting her lace shawl tightly round her and running away. Perhaps Pierrot divined her qualms, for he held her hand firmly but lightly as they passed through the hall, already thronged with men and women in every kind of fantastic costume, all masked, and made their way to the cloak-rooms. He was waiting for her, alone and silent and self-contained, as she emerged. The band in the distance was just starting a soft, dreamy one-step. People were lazily beginning to thread their way down the wide corridor. The beautiful ballroom was half full—not too crowded—as he led her in.

There was something of a pause—a sort of rustle of interest—as the two graceful, fantastic black figures advanced hand-in-hand into the room.

In full view of everyone—masked though they all were—he absurdly and with a delightful grace raised her fingers to his lips, bending on one knee as he did so.



"Then he made her the low salute of a true Pierrot."

Then they began to dance.

That, of course, had been the risk—supposing she had danced badly—supposing their steps had not fitted? Supposing Pierrot had trod on her toes, jostled her, and banged her round the room to some whirlwind measure of his own? The plot would have been spoilt, the dream shattered.

But none of these things happened. Instead, from the first turn, they knew that their feet had been made for each other—that they must, in dreams perhaps, have danced together nightly since the world was first made. And, after that first bar, Columbine forgot her momentary fright, forgot her erratic behaviour, forgot even that little room where she should have been sitting, in company with two sausages and the Black Cat, staring into the fire. She even forgot that the money in her purse could be counted in shillings, and that she knew not whence would come the next one-pound note.

And Pierrot, too, forgot his masquerade, his plot; forgot certain things that were troubling him; forgot even what his mind had relegated to his ready wit—the unmasking that would take place at midnight—forgot all this, and gave himself up to dancing with Columbine—the Columbine of his dreams come to life from a back attic in Bloomsbury. There were other Pierrots there, too, and other Columbines—in white and pink and green and purple—but the two black figures that danced together so exquisitely and so gracefully, that behaved in such fantastic, dainty fashion, were conspicuous above all.

Too conspicuous, it seemed, for a certain Harlequin, who, not dancing himself, stood, aloof and masked, against the wall and watched them. Sympathetically conspicuous, it seemed also to a certain Powder-Puff, who, not following the general custom of the times, did not dance more than twice with one man, but flitted from one to another, distributing her favours apparently to anyone who was without a partner—a dainty, attractive Powder-Puff, of a height and figure curiously like Pauline.

And, gradually, through the dream of the dance, of the ballroom, of Pierrot, the constant observation of these two pairs of eyes filtered into Columbine's consciousness. The Harlequin made her vaguely uneasy—a tall, slight figure of a man, with a hard mouth showing beneath his short mask—a rather grim, set mouth.

Once, as they left the ballroom between dances, he accosted Pierrot.

"From the first turn they knew that their feet had been made for each other."

"Is that you, Gerald?" he asked in a low, harsh voice.

Pierrot made his fantastic salute.

"Pierrot, at your service, Harlequin," he said, gaily, but in rather a strange high voice. "I believe we do belong to the same family, so I have understood, but I am a later, spurious addition, I am told."

And so they passed on, leaving Harlequin biting his lips.

But they had not done with him yet. Columbine, deposited in the cloak-room to have a stitch put to her little sandal, on emerging found Harlequin waiting outside. There was no sign of Pierrot. He took her arm abruptly, before she knew what he was doing.

"Come, Nancy," he said, gruffly, "it is time you danced with me, my lady, and then I shall take you home."

Columbine's heart beat fast—not so much from fright as from a

perfectly absurd feeling of jealousy of "Nancy," with whom Pierrot was supposed to be dancing all the evening—absurd and unreasoning, for was not Pierrot just a fantastic dream-figure drifting into her life ridiculously through the Black Cat—drifting in for an evening's adventure—to vanish at dawn?

But who *was* Nancy? And what relation was she to this rather unpleasant Harlequin who claimed her? And what of her vow to Pierrot, that she would dance with no one but him? And, oh, where was Pierrot?

He was there, in an instant, between them, appearing from nowhere, suddenly, debonair, confident, and undisturbed. He took Pauline's other hand.

"A certain Harlequin stood aloof and watched them."

"Come, Columbine," he said, coolly, "the music begins. Is your shoe right now?"

And right under the nose of Harlequin, who, short of creating a scene, had to relinquish her arm, he wafted her back to the ballroom. Something remarkably like a soft curse followed them. And there at the door was Powder-Puff, watching through her mask as she chatted to a tall Crusader.

"Wonderful Pierrot!" Columbine just heard as they passed.

"HOW," murmured Columbine, "if I am not to remove my mask, am I to have anything to eat? It is banal, Pierrot, to want anything to eat, and in the realms from which no doubt you come perhaps you don't need such things—but I—I only had scone and butter and cocoa for lunch."

Pierrot stopped quite still in the middle of the dance. He was even shaken out of his charming attitude of Pierrot.

"Good Lord!" he said, "how could I have been such an ass as not to have thought of it? I can't forgive myself—I need kicking!"

Then, dropping back at once to Pierrot, he tucked her arm in his and led her out of the room.

"Come," he said, bending over and whispering close to her head, "there is a little private spot I know where you and I—just you and I—will have the most delicious viands from the supper-table wafted to us alone—and you shall take off your mask without fear of that sweet face being seen by anyone."

He seemed to know the house very well, for he led her through a maze of passages and rooms till they came to a remote and dimly-lit conservatory.

"No one knows of this—it exists for you and me. Sit here while I fetch the minions with the food and drink." He departed. She slipped into one of the only two chairs, and woman-like raised the lace frill of her mask to powder her nose. Some instinct forbade her to take off the mask altogether till Pierrot returned. She had seen Harlequin watching them as they left the room.

Then, swiftly, she dropped it again, for she heard a step coming along the passage—and it was not the light, quick step she had begun to know as Pierrot's. Harlequin appeared in the doorway of the little conservatory.

"So, here you are," he said, in a grim voice. "Now, come, it's time you stopped this fooling, Nancy, and came home. I've a lot to say to you."

"You are mistaken, I think," said Pauline, in a voice that shook a little, cool as she appeared to be.

"It's no use pretending, Nancy," he said, shortly. "I happened to see the frock when Lucille sent it home, so it's absurd going on trying to fool me. You have played about with Gerald quite long enough—not only to-night——"

How she would dislike anyone who spoke like that if he were her husband!—she supposed the outraged Harlequin was "Nancy's" husband. And Pierrot—her nice Pierrot—he had been playing round with "Nancy," had he?—Harlequin's wife—so he was just a real human young man and not a fantastic being from another world. She felt suddenly rather tired of the whole adventure. If she just whisked off her mask and made a face at Harlequin, he would retire discomfited and disconcerted. It would be easy—but very tame.

Also, she had promised Pierrot.

Then her sense of humour came uppermost. She would play Pierrot's game—whatever it was—till she had had her supper, at any rate.

"I am not 'Nancy,' whoever she might be," she said, in a voice that was stifling with laughter.

Harlequin took that, it seemed, for further disguise, and, it appeared, lost his temper.

"Stop this nonsense!" he snapped, and his mouth under his mask was very grim and hard. "Take off that infernal mask and come home at once—or I shall make you!"

"Oh, will you?" murmured Columbine, softly. "You would find yourself in a very awkward predicament if you did. Pierrot would have something to say to you about it!"

Was there just something in her voice that made him doubt? If so, he was too angry to be cautious. He made a quick step forward and seized the mask by the lace frill. She held on to it with both hands, defiant, and not laughing now. She wanted Pierrot desperately, for it had suddenly struck her she was in a private house at a private ball to which she had not been invited.

And suddenly Pierrot came—appeared as if from nowhere, gay and debonair. He just touched Harlequin's arm. "I think not, Harlequin," he said, softly. "Columbine has done me the honour to choose me as her sole cavalier to-night. She will not dance with anyone else, unworthy though I am. She has deigned to trust herself wholly to me."

"Stop that confounded mumming, Gerald! You've done quite enough mischief—and if ever I meet you again with Nancy I'll thrash the life out of you!"

Pierrot's lips tightened a little under his mask, but he laughed lightly enough.

"I should deeply regret being deprived of my charming cousin's society, but the present question is merely that you leave Columbine alone—in fact, that you leave us both alone—quite alone, to enjoy a little private supper that Jules is bringing along immediately."

Harlequin's face went white with rage. I regret to say he had not that control of temper, that airy attitude one would expect of his cloth. Perhaps he felt this, or perhaps he really wanted to knock Pierrot down then and there, for he whipped off his mask as if in preparation for something, when, suddenly, Powder-Puff sauntered gaily into the little room.

"Hallo!" she said, also in a voice stifling with laughter. "There seems to be some excitement going on here—Columbine, Pierrot, and Harlequin—the old trio! Are you rehearsing? If so, do begin over again."

Harlequin, at that voice, twisted round suddenly and stood still. Then he looked again at Columbine. The two girls were identical in height and figure, but Powder-

"'Hallo!' she said. 'There seems to be some excitement going on here—Columbine, Pierrot, and Harlequin—the old trio!'"

Puff's hair was, of course, powdered white, and piled on top, whereas Columbine's soft fair hair was tucked close to her head. Harlequin looked from one to the other, and his attitude of pugnacity relaxed. Pierrot turned away and lit a cigarette, after a low salute to Powder-Puff.

And the two girls looked at each other openly up and down, through their masks. Then Powder-Puff sauntered over to Columbine.

"What a sweet frock! It's quite the loveliest here to-night," she said, pleasantly.

"I think yours is exquisite, too," murmured Columbine, rather shyly.

It was then that Powder-Puff leant suddenly over to Columbine's ear and whispered, "Of course the shoes wouldn't fit—you've such tiny feet. I love your little sandals."

"They both appeared to forget the Black Pierrot and Columbine, and stood like two children, looking into each other's eyes."

This time Pauline—poor little Columbine—was completely bewildered. She was not quite sure of her cue. But Pierrot was looking quizzically and intently at the two girls' feet. So intently that, perforce, Harlequin must look too.

Now, Powder-Puff's feet, though shapely and encased in the most exquisite shoes, were large—distinctly large. Columbine's, as has been said, were absurdly small. And Harlequin looked—and looked.

Then Powder-Puff, with her nonchalant easy way, turned to Harlequin.

"Well, Jack," she said, coolly, "what excuses have you to offer that you haven't been near me the whole evening, or asked me to dance even once? If I weren't such an easy-going soul I think I should be distinctly jealous of the way you have followed this sweet little Columbine about the whole night. She is very attractive, but still—there are limits you know."

At that moment a beaming waiter appeared, followed by two myrmidons with trays.

"The suppaire, M'sieur Geral' ordered," he remarked. "Suppaire for two," he added, emphatically, glancing disapprovingly at Harlequin.

But Harlequin was not looking at Jules—he was looking at the feet of Columbine. Then swiftly he turned and looked at the feet of Powder-Puff.

The myrmidons sidled away. Jules beamed.

"I will return myself with the *Pêches Melba*, M'sieur Geral'," he said, as he vanished down the passage.

Then, with the departing of the waiters, the spell was broken. Powder-Puff suddenly slipped across to Harlequin and put her hands on his shoulders, standing on tiptoe to look up into his face.

"Jack, we are horribly *de trop*. Don't you think—we—*we* might go and see if Jules can produce something for us, too?" she said, in a very small voice.

At that Harlequin caught her under the arm and, drawing her to him, lifted her mask.

"I *have* been an ass!" he muttered.

"So have I," Powder-Puff just said.

At that they both appeared to forget the Black Pierrot and Columbine and the supper and everything else, and just stood like two children, looking into each other's eyes. It seemed as though Pierrot dared not move for fear of breaking the spell. The cigarette was burning his fingers, too. And Columbine wanted her supper to a point of desperation.

At last Harlequin and Powder-Puff strolled off down the passage without so much as a glance backward. Pierrot threw away his cigarette.

"So much for that!" he said, joyously. "Will Columbine deign to raise her mask, that she may no longer let this precious lobster grow cold with waiting?"

"Will I not!" murmured Columbine, removing the mask with a sigh of satisfaction.

And yet the *Homard Américaine* took some time to vanish. Columbine without her mask—it was difficult for Pierrot to keep his eyes on a mere lobster. Jules appeared with the *Pêches Melba*, followed by a myrmidon bearing coffee and liqueurs.

"In a little while the guests unmask themselves," he murmured, confidentially.

"How long?" asked Pierrot, waking from his dream.

"After zis dance—when ze music stop. Then we 'ave orders to serve the supper."

Columbine, too, awoke from her dream.

The Black Cat, still perched on Pierrot's shoulder, smiled fatuously at her, bringing back to her the loneliness of her little room and the decreasing shillings in her purse.

"I must go, Pierrot," she said, and her voice had suddenly lost its gaiety and was perilously near tears.

THE car was waiting as Columbine and Pierrot, again masked, slipped out as the last strain of the music faded away. They could hear the outburst of talk and laughter behind them as the guests unmasked.

"Tell me, Pierrot," said Pauline, breaking a long, satisfying silence, "what *have* we been doing to-night?"

"We have been falling in love with each other," responded Pierrot, ridiculously grave, just under his breath.

"Oh-h!"

But as he did not move, did not attempt even to take her hand, she trusted him. Besides, the statement was obviously correct.

"I mean," she said, presently, when she had collected herself again, "what was it all about—Harlequin and Powder-Puff—and this frock and all?"

"*That*," said Pierrot, suddenly gay again, "was the best night's work I've done for a long time. We—you and I—have restored a foolish wife—my cousin, incidentally—to a still more idiotic husband. It was her idea—my part only was to find a girl of the same height and figure to wear the frock she knew he thought she was going to wear—make her thoroughly conspicuous, rouse his jealousy. Ah, there you have it—what love muddles up, a good deal of jealousy can usually cure."

"But how—how did you find *me*?"

"The great god Luck, Columbine, symbolized by this most inadequate but precious animal," he said, touching the Black Cat on his shoulder. "Also, I had seen you three times. A friend of mine has the honour to live on the ground floor."

With that the car slowed up to the door of the tall, gloomy house in Bloomsbury. The adventure was over. In a few moments Pierrot would vanish, Columbine would doff her exquisite frock, divest herself of the gaiety, the joy, the dream of another world, and become again Pauline, the girl without a job, with two sausages and a few shillings between her and a maid-of-all-work's drudgery.

Except that Pierrot had said——

She smiled gaily, bravely, composedly up at him as he helped her out of the car

"Good night, Pierrot! Oh, and—and—thank you."

Then, suddenly, she could say no more, for the way Pierrot was looking at her.

"There are no words to-night, Columbine, that I dare say," he said, in a very low voice, "but, perhaps, to-morrow my usual flow of language will come back to me."

"To-morrow?" she whispered.

"The Black Cat has still to be restored to you—your Luck—but it remains with me to-night."

"Pierrot," she said, after a pause, while she fumbled with her key at the door, "how on earth did you know I had a Black Cat?"

"I did not," said he, "until the moment I opened your door and saw it on the mantelpiece. Then the gods inspired me."

"Oh, Pierrot!" she said, helplessly.

"I was very determined, you see."

With that the door was open. Pierrot fantastically knelt on one knee on the threshold and kissed her hand very gently.

"Not for to-night only, but for always, Columbine," he said. Then suddenly sprang to his feet. "By the way, you have no pennies for your gas-fire."

He dashed down the steps and borrowed two from the discreet and phlegmatic chauffeur while she protested halfway between tears and laughter, confusion and tenderness, and pressed them into her hand. With that, the door was shut.

Woman-like, it was the thoughtfulness of the pennies more than the fantastic vow that filled her mind as she stole quietly upstairs to that cold, bare little room, taking her dreams with her.

To-morrow, Pierrot, whose very name she did not know, would come again.

"Pierrot knelt and kissed her hand very gently."

The Spider's Web

by

WILLIAM CAINE
AND
H·M·BATEMAN

JAMES MACOWL, painter of pictures, stood one fine afternoon near the post-office of a Great Exhibition, comparing for the three hundred and seventy-ninth time his watch with the clock of that post-office; and made oath, for the two hundred and ninety-eighth time, that he wasn't going to wait for Her another second. Nor did he break this oath. Had he been perfectly wise he would, of course, have gone home. But he was not perfectly wise—which of us is?—and the thought of the good shilling which he had paid to get into the Exhibition prevented him from getting out of it until, as he told himself, he had had something for his money.

So, muttering his discontent, the poor worm turned and shambled away in the first direction that offered, to begin a miserable and solitary progress through the Courts of Honour, the Halls of Welcome, the Chambers of Machinery, the Vestibules of Art, the Olde Londone Streetes, the Dalmatian Villages, and the Hottentot Kraals, and round and round the bandstands, until he was reduced, by reason of his loneliness among the swarming myriads of whom he made one, to a state of abject imbecility. Only thus can be explained that which he presently did.

He found himself (he knew not how) standing in front of a basely-designed erection of wood, with rococo mouldings of *papier mâché* all over it. It was furnished with a pay-box and a turnstile, and across the whole of its upper part was written this legend:—

THE SPIDER'S WEB.

In front of the turnstile stood a small man with a voice like a cracked but very powerful trumpet, who screamed eternally: "This way to The Spider's Web. The most marvellous maze ever constructed. This way to The Spider's Web. Lots of fun for young and old. This way to The Spider's Web. The most marvellous maze ever constructed. This way to The Spider's Web. Lots of fun for young and old. This way——"

No one was going into that place, but a considerable crowd was standing outside it. Presently MacOwl (whom the trumpet-voiced person fascinated) perceived a young man and a young woman emerge from behind a heavy curtain which hung just beyond the turnstile. Instantly the crowd set up a frenzied yell of laughter, while every finger was pointed at this harmless couple. They started, and their faces, which had been chalk-white, grew suddenly scarlet, and they fled back behind the curtain. MacOwl thought he heard the girl sob.

"What is all this?" he inquired of a man who stood near him.

This person smoothed out his face, which from merriment had been convulsed, and answered: "It's a Myze. Them as goes in can get out only two ways, see? If they can get to the middle, see? there's a bridge there for to take them out. Or they can come back through thishyere turnstile. Then *we* 'oots 'em, see?"

"I see," said MacOwl. And he thought: "I've never been in a Maze. It might be rather fun. Anyhow, I must do something to pass the time, or I shall go crazy."

Poor fool! He was already crazy, else had he never paid his tuppence and passed beyond that turnstile.

The crowd, as he did these things, favoured him with a derisive cheer. He turned and smiled and waved his hand, as who should say, "No, my friends. You won't see *me* again."

He pushed the curtains aside and entered The Spider's Web.

HE found himself in a straight and narrow corridor, open to the air, with wooden walls about ten feet high and painted a crude pink. This last point is important; for MacOwl, as a painter, had some very decided ideas about colour, one of which was that of all possible colours pink is quite the most odious. He simply could not bear pink. And this was the very pinkest pink that he had ever encountered. Had it not been for the crowd in front of the entrance he must

have run back at once, so dreadful was this pinkness with which these wooden walls had been pinkified. But he was not going to give those jeering blackguards the chance to point their fingers at *him*. Not he! So he continued on down the corridor. It opened almost at once into a similar corridor, which ran across it on a curve. Here began the Maze proper.

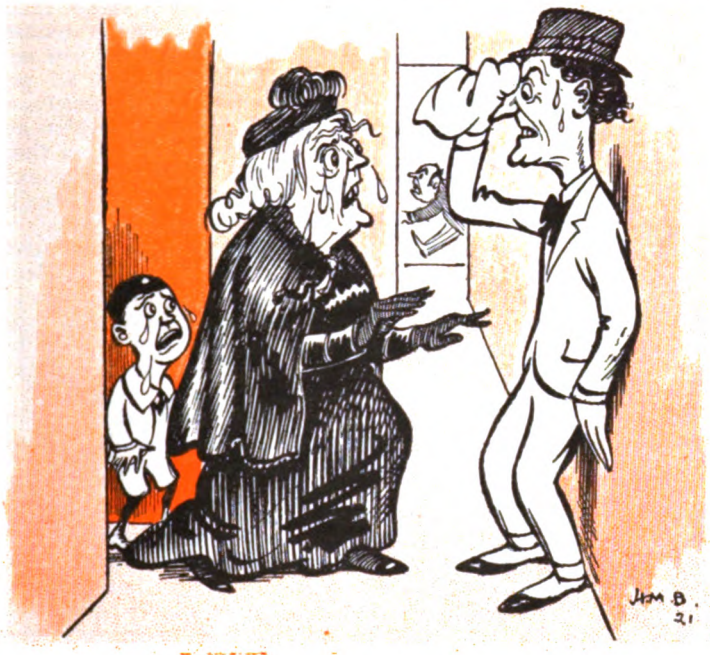
It was now for MacOwl to choose whether he would turn to the right or to the left. He could, by reason of its curve, see only a short distance along this new corridor in either direction, and, as there was nothing to guide him in his choice, he spun a coin, and, heads coming up, he turned obediently to the left and fared forwards, passing, to his right, several openings in the pink wall. But the invitation of these he declined, until the corridor in which he walked proved to be a *cul de sac*, and then he had to retrace his steps and find another way. Almost immediately he passed under a bridge whereon a youth was standing. This youth said to MacOwl, "Ah, there you are, are yer? And how long do you think you're goin' to *be* there, eh?" MacOwl gave him a cold stare (for he was already very sorry that he had entered The Spider's Web), and went on, just a little faster than before.

Not long afterwards he found an opening in one of the two pink walls, through which he could see suddenly right to the very heart of the Maze. But he could not go there because this opening was barred with very strong, pink-painted, steel-wire netting. Beyond it, across the corridor to which it forbade access, was another exactly similar opening, and beyond that another, and so on, some of these openings being clear and some wired. At the end of this series of openings could be seen the goal, a circular platform upon which a number of people were standing. From this platform a bridge was carried across the Maze to the exit. It was the bridge under which MacOwl had recently passed.

THE sight of his destination revived the drooping spirits of MacOwl, and he started off with a still quicker step, determined to be done with this nonsense as soon as possible. After charging along between pink walls for several minutes he found himself confronted by a heavy curtain. He had returned to the entrance.

"All right," he said aloud (for he was already not quite himself), 'this is good enough for me." And he thrust the curtain aside and stepped briskly out. Whereupon it appeared to him that a horizontal forest of derisive, pointing fingers was directed towards him, while there sounded in his ears as it were the laughter of ten-score wagon-

"The crowd set up a frenzied yell of laughter."



"'Oh, sir,' cried the old woman, '*do* you 'appen to know the way out?'"

loads of fiends, and he became conscious of a vast throng of mockingly-contorted faces, whose bestial eyes gloated upon him with a triumph not to be described. It would seem that MacOwl was already a good deal wrought up and not in a fit state to judge phenomena with perfect clearness, for there were only a few dozen harmless citizens out there, and their mirth at his expense was perfectly good-natured.

At any rate, his reception was too much for him. His nerve broke and he darted back behind the curtain with an oath on his lips and rage and terror in his heart. He could not face those people out there. He simply could not. Anything—even a resumption of his gropings in The Spider's Web—was preferable to passing through the turnstile under the eyes of that band of howling savages.

For a moment he stood shaking and biting at a thumb, and then he ran back up the pink-walled corridor, and—having still some small remnants of rationality in him—turned, when he reached the cross passage, to the right, rather than to the left as formerly.

You understand, don't you? that the walls between which he moved were in no single way diversified; they were all perfectly smooth, quite unscaleable, and uniformly and disastrously pink. Here and there were openings in them, and this was the only variety which they afforded to the eye. It was a hot afternoon, and the air in these high, narrow passages was stagnant and stifling. MacOwl was, by this time, going at about five miles an hour, for the madness of the lost was gaining on him every moment. He streamed with perspiration, his head ached; he was nauseated by the pinkness which environed him; his heart pounded against his ribs, and his soul was filled with an exorbitant bitterness against Fate and Her and himself. He had been in this Spider's Web perhaps ten minutes, but already it seemed to him that he had never been anywhere else. He began to have strange ideas, to wonder if he had not, by some unfortunate chance, got into hell—hell would naturally be pink—and if he was not condemned to totter through eternity round these awful passages; if he had not so tottered since time began.

SUDDENLY he was confronted by an old woman and a little boy. So fast was he walking that he very nearly ran them down, for they came out upon him through an opening in the wall. They were both weeping copiously.

"Oh, sir," cried the old woman, "*do* you 'appen to know the way out?" And she laid trembling hands on MacOwl's arm and gazed up entreatingly into his face.

MacOwl had a kind heart, and by the

obvious despair of these wretches he was moved to compassion, so that for the moment he forgot his own miseries. To tell this weak old woman and this puny child that he knew no more how to find the exit than they did would have been nothing less than a brutality. He couldn't do it. "Want to get out?" he said, encouragingly. "Why, that's easy. Just you follow me." And he set off again, but at a gentler pace, for those whom he had undertaken to rescue were nigh upon the point of exhaustion.

Behind him he heard the woman comforting the child. "Cheer up, Johnny!" she was saying. "We'll be out of 'ere very soon now. This kind gentleman's going to show us the way."

MacOwl went forwards, endowing his step with a confidence which he was very far from feeling. He turned briskly to the right, passed several openings, turned to the left, turned again to the right, exactly as if he knew what he was doing. And lo! he found himself gazing directly into the central space of The Spider's Web. There, within twenty feet of him, was the platform, a short stair leading to it from the ground.

Unfortunately, the opening through which he looked was barred with wire netting.

Upon the platform was a small crowd of people. These people, catching sight of MacOwl behind the wire, now set up a roar of mocking welcome and all pointed their fingers at him. They knew, as did not MacOwl, that the place where he stood was just about twice as far from the centre (*via* the windings of the Maze) as was the entrance. For they were all people who had themselves achieved the adventure; they were secure and happy and were separated from the exit by no more than the length of the perfectly straight bridge; and they were therefore disposed to recompense themselves for their past sufferings by enjoying awhile the sufferings of others—of MacOwl, for instance.

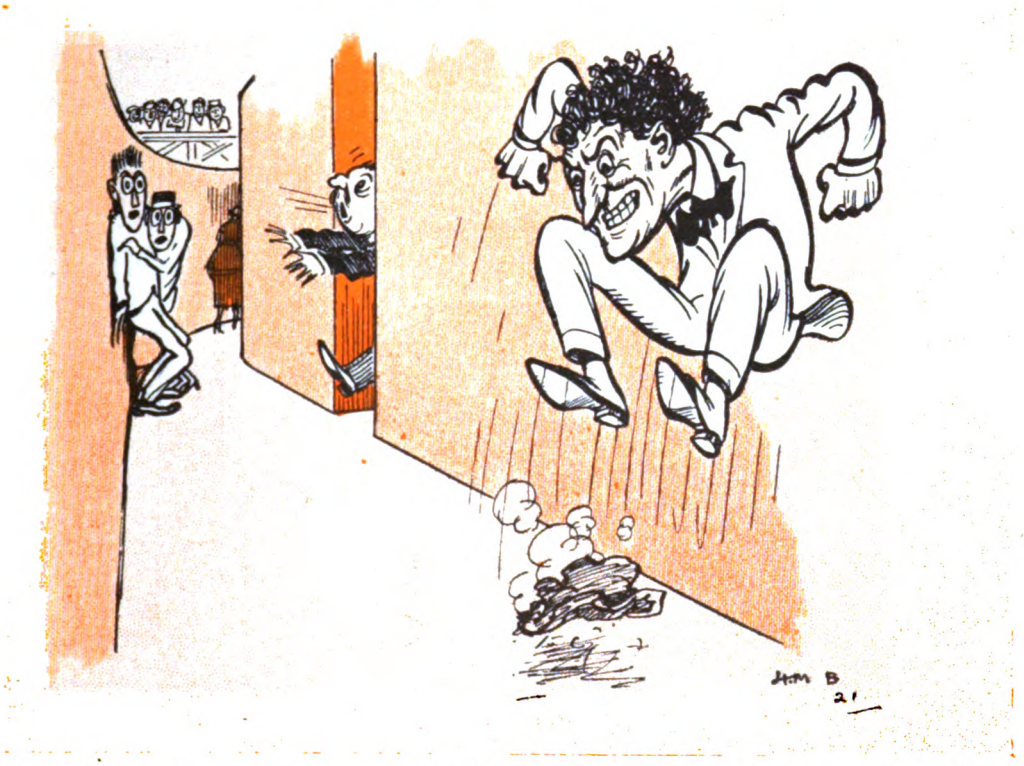
"Pop off, old son!" they shouted. "You've miles to go yet. Don't waste your time. Get a move on." And One of them threw to MacOwl behind the wire a nut, accompanied by a few jesting words. This was provocative of much mirth.

And who, pray, was that One?

I hate to tell you, but Truth shall prevail. It was—can I say it?—yes, I can; no, I can't—yes, I must—it was—it was—no, I can't do it.

Let me say no more than this. MacOwl

"One of the crowd threw to MacOwl behind the wire a nut, accompanied by a few jesting words."



"He smashed the hat on the ground and jumped on it about fifty times. This did him a great deal of good."

knew at last why he had been so long delayed outside the post-office.

For two boiling seconds he stood, rooted to the earth, while his mind grappled with and at last assimilated the hideous reality. Then he sprang behind the barrier and hastened away, consumed by a single desire—to find the entrance. The *entrance*, you understand.

No longer were his hopes fixed upon that central platform, upon that bridge, upon that exit. On the contrary. Absolutely.

He sped between pink walls, hunted by the Furies of Rage, Impotence, and Disillusion.

But he was now a marked man, and henceforward whenever he passed across a line of wired and unwired openings—I should tell you that there were three such lines—and so became visible to those dreadful people on the platform, they all—*all*, I say—pointed their fingers at him and screamed, "There he goes!" or "Stick it, Pongo!"

This had the effect of causing MacOwl gradually to increase his pace until he was very nearly running, and presently he became aware that he had lost the old woman and the little boy. He did not even care. It had come to this with MacOwl, that to the fate of those two innocents he was now wholly indifferent. He had quite enough to do on his own account without worrying about them. He didn't propose to start hunting for any old woman and boy. He wanted to find the entrance. The *entrance*, I repeat.

The entrance naturally withheld itself. If MacOwl had not been, by this time, quite foolish, he would have known that there was for him now but one way out of The Spider's Web.

SUDDENLY he perceived a hat lying on the ground. It was a nice-looking hat of grey velours. He kicked it. This relieved his soul a little. The hat fell to the earth, and he kicked it again and again. He dribbled it in front of him as he went along. He did his best to kick it over the pink wall. He derived pleasure from kicking this hat. He failed to kick it over the wall. He got tired of the thing and picked it up, intending to hurl it over the wall and be rid of it. By this time it was turned inside out, and on the lining he read his own name, carefully inked in a decorative lettering which he recognized.

It was his hat. When he had lost it or thrown it away he had no idea. But it was ruined.

He smashed it on the ground and jumped on it about fifty times. This did him a great deal of good.

Looking up from this devil's work, he perceived the same young man and woman who had fled behind the entrance-curtain from the mockery of the mob, standing within a few yards of him. Their eyes were distended and their mouths were open, and the girl had shrunk behind her companion's body.

MacOwl uttered a ghastly laugh, and turned and fled.

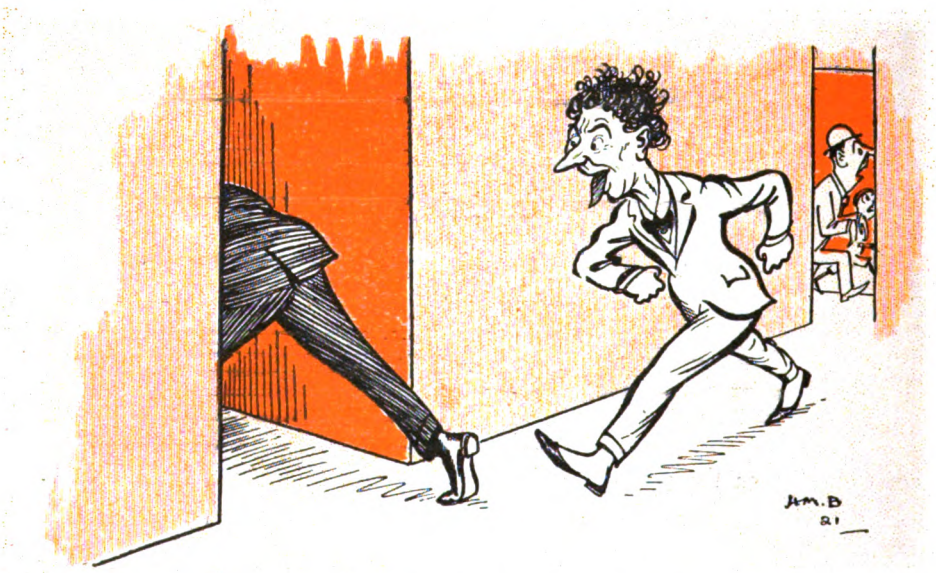
After further pink ages had rolled over his head, he met that very youth who had addressed him from the bridge. This person said to him, " You seem to be 'avin' a good deal of difficulty, gettin' out. Let *me* show you the way. *I* know this old Myze like my 'and."

MacOwl understood that an angel had been sent down from Heaven to his assistance. He said, " If you only will, I shall be most infinitely obliged to you. But it's the entrance I want; *not* the exit. The *entrance*, you comprehend."

" The entrance ? " said the young man. " Why, certingly. *Jest* as you please. 'T's all one to me. Come on " ; and he began to hasten through the intricacies of The Spider's Web with an assurance which at once amazed and delighted MacOwl. He followed with his tongue out, and by dint of exertions which he was in no kind of state to attempt succeeded in keeping his conductor in sight for several minutes, during which time they must have covered as much as half a mile of ground.

And then—where was his conductor ?

He had vanished. He had dodged and doubled through one opening and then through another, and he was not. But to MacOwl's shocked ear was borne, muffled by pink walls, the sound of a fiendish laugh.



" He followed with his tongue out, and succeeded in keeping his conductor in sight for several minutes."

A plant ! A game which this ruffian played for his own entertainment ! Were such things possible ?

MacOwl now understood that an angel had not been sent down from Heaven to his assistance. He shook his clenched fists three times high above his head, consigned that young devil to the pit whence he had risen, and pressed on. And every time he crossed the line of open spaces the people in the middle of the Maze—*every single one of them*—pointed him out and gave him an encouraging cheer; while every time he went under the bridge somebody chaffed him or dropped orange-peel on him or otherwise distinguished him.

THE old woman and the boy and the young couple were not the only pleasure-seekers whom MacOwl met during his nightmare progress through The Spider's Web. There were all sorts of people down there who had entered, long ago, through the turnstile.

with a laugh on their lips, and now crept, semi-idiotic and prematurely aged, along the interminable convolutions of that awful place. Several times he encountered a middle-aged man with wife and six children, and every time one more of the children had proved unable to walk any farther. And there was one oldish gentleman, very fat and expensively dressed, whom he saw not less than ten times, and every time this old gentleman begged him, with tears, to show him the way out, and every time he hurled a quite new string of abusive epithets after MacOwl's flying figure. And there were two young girls, one in yellow and the other in blue, who just walked blindly along, crying softly and holding one another up. And once MacOwl came upon a dreadful sight—a great giant of a fellow with a big black beard who beat and kicked at the end wall of a *cul de sac* and spouted blasphemies as a volcano spouts ashes. MacOwl stopped his ears, covered his eyes, and ran away.

All of a sudden he was in the centre of the Maze.

He stood in a clear, circular space in the middle of which was the platform. Its steps were before him, nor was there any intervening wire net to thwart his advance. From the platform the bridge stretched straight and solid to the exit. Upon the platform was—but he no longer cared Who was on the platform. It had come to that with MacOwl.

With a sob of joy he sprang to the steps and raced up them. The Person whose identity can no longer be veiled met him at the top. "Thank goodness!" she said; "I thought you were never going to get out. Now you can take me somewhere for tea."

He met her eye coldly, but her beauty was a thing to which he could not blind himself. "You threw me a nut," he said, brokenly, "You pointed at me. You shouted 'There's a nut for you, Pongo!' at me. Why the devil should I take you anywhere for tea?" he demanded, with a flicker of manly spirit.

"Oh!" she cried, "he's cross! He's most awfully cross, poor dear!"

"Yes," snapped MacOwl. "So would you be if you'd been down in that infernal place for the last hour and a half." He flung himself on a bench that ran round under the rail of the platform and stared out over The Spider's Web with smouldering eyes.

"How long did you wait for me at the post-office?" she inquired.

'I waited," he informed her stiffly, "from three o'clock, when we were to meet, until a quarter to four. I thought that just about long enough."

"Well," she said, "it's only a quarter past four *now*, so you can't have been down there an hour and a half. You've not had nearly such a bad time as I had. I was a bit early for our appointment and I came in here, at a quarter to three, to kill time. Do you know when I got on to this platform? At four precisely. Do you understand that I was prowling about in that ghastly Maze for an hour and a quarter? I only got up here fifteen minutes ago, and the first thing I saw was *you* glaring at me from the far end of that line of spaces. My heart simply bled for you. Why, I only threw that nut at you to let you know that I was here—that a friend was close by."

"You didn't!" he retorted, hotly. "You called out, 'There's a nut for you, Pongo.' If that's your notion of sympathy——"

"But," she explained, "I simply couldn't help it. You looked so horribly funny behind that wire. Like something in a cage, you looked. People *do*, you know, from up here."

AT this moment everyone on the platform, with the exception of MacOwl and his companion, pointed energetically and screamed: "There's Old Fatty again! Buck up, Fatty! Never say die!" and MacOwl's eyes were just quick enough to observe the figure of the plump, well-dressed, and abusive old gentleman slink guiltily across a line of spaces.

Whereupon he sprang to his feet and yelled: "So it is! Stick to it, Fatty! Good old Fatty! Fifty to one, Fatty!" And turning to his companion, he said: "Fatty, we call him, eh? I suppose you haven't got a nut or a bit of orange-peel about you, have you?"

"No," she said, "and if I had I wouldn't give it to you. I want my tea. Come on! I've had enough of this place."

"But," he protested, "*I* haven't. Why, *my* fun's only beginning. You wouldn't be so hard-hearted."

"Yes, I would," she said. "And you ought to be ashamed of yourself, wanting to stop and hoot at those poor things down there!"

Five minutes later—she was very beautiful—he was ordering tea for her. Yes, she was very beautiful. Beautiful enough to lead him away from his fun. But not so far away from it as to the altar.

That nut stuck in his throat.

VOLTURIO INVESTIGATES

by

L·J·BEESTON

ILLUSTRATED BY E·VERPILLEUX

LINEGAR impatiently waved away the smoke floating from Williams's cigar. "Volturio is late," said he, worriedly. "Nearly fifteen minutes late. I don't like it."

"Twelve, to be precise," corrected Brodie. "He will come. I say, it's infernally cold in this infernal office." He lunged with a foot at a chunk of coal in the open grate. "The caretaker won't like a fire burning so late, though. A pity that Volturio fixed our meeting here for ten o'clock."

Linegar held up a hand. "Hark! I rather think I hear him," he announced.

Brodie paused with his right heel suspended over the fireplace; Linegar kept his palm raised; Williams twisted his head round towards the door and kept it twisted.

The three men were in a large office at the top of a building in the neighbourhood of Tower Hill. In the centre was a long desk, with a double rail above it, and three leather-topped stools on both sides. There was a roll-top desk in a corner, an old-fashioned copying-press in another, and a telephone against the wall. The window overlooked a tiny quadrangle formed by a building at the back, and others on each side. This well was an absolutely black hole just now, the hour being late. The hundred and seventeen stairs, all of stone, with an iron rail, that went down to the basement, passed three landings below the top one, where other offices were grouped. The tenants of these had gone home some time, and the caretaker and his wife were already sweeping them out.

The office where the three men waited for a fourth bore on its door, which was half mahogany and half frosted glass, the inscription: "Brodie & Co., General Merchants."

"You are right," said Williams, after a pause. "Here comes Volturio."

A strong hand grasped the door handle, and a man entered. He threw a keen look round. "Good," said he; "we are all here. I was detained a few minutes."

He spoke without apology. He spoke masterfully. He did not look like a man who ever apologized. The short, thick top-coat upon his broad shoulders glistened with rain. He removed his hard-felt hat and shook the wet from it.

"There's water enough out to drown a shark," said he.

The three men did not answer, and each kept his eyes upon the new-comer. When the latter had taken off his saturated coat he seized a small and rather rickety table by the side of the copying-press and carried it to the space between the long office desk and the fire.

"There!" said he, setting it down. "Suppose we all sit round this table while we hold our conference? It makes a warm place; we can use it for our notes and papers; and being close together we can pitch our voices low. Draw up!"

"It's quiet enough here, though," said Linegar. "There is only the caretaker left on the premises."

He had a queer habit, after speaking, of sniffing and blinking his eyes.

"What's the best news, Volturio?" questioned Brodie, taking off his round spectacles and rubbing the lenses with his handkerchief.

"Best or worst — I can see Volturio has something," said Williams, picking a fragment from the chewed end of his cigar.

"That's as true as—as that our inscription of 'General Merchants' on the door is the other thing, being a blind to cover our real affairs," answered Volturio. "First we will take the business that has brought us all

"The deadly-looking revolver Volturio placed on the table before him. Three pairs of eyes watched his movements in a tense, deep silence."

here: the Duchess of Claypool's diamonds. Her Grace will be at the Dover Street ball to-morrow night, and she will glisten with almost every jewel she owns. To that end I worked hard, being almost responsible for the ball! Our scheme for those jewels is good. It scintillates more than the stones. The urgent summons calling her away; the mishap to her car *en route*, our ready-and-waiting taxi—all so simple, but with every angle and rough edge polished away by our united intelligences. The main scheme, as usual, was created by Skarrs, whom we acknowledge the centre of our little system, the best brains in Brodie and Co., very general merchants. To each one of us was allotted his part. Now are we met, our plans, I take it, perfected, to cast a final look round, and to examine every risk under a mental microscope."

"You can talk, Volturio," said Linegar. He sniffed and he blinked.

"We have had our chat before you came," said Williams. "All seems in order."

VOLTURIO leaned back, a rather terrible smile lifting his little black moustache. "Seems?" he echoed. "Yes, seems is the word. As a matter of fact, our idea has exploded like a fire-ball in a dark night; and that isn't the worst, either."

In the tense silence that followed he produced a slip of paper. "The message on this is in cipher," said he. "Skarrs's cipher, and from him to me. Brodie, read it and pass it on."

Brodie read. It took him less than a minute.

"Damnation!" he spluttered.

During that minute, Volturio, leaning forward, had fixed upon Brodie a look as searching as if he had been trying to see the very soul in him. He said, quietly: "Pass it to Linegar."

Brodie obeyed. He removed his spectacles and rubbed them hard.

Linegar ran his eyes over the cryptic lines. He threw up his head, pierced with astonishment, and saw Volturio peering at him as he had peered at Brodie.

"A hellish mistake! I'll swear it's a mistake!" exclaimed Linegar, disturbed to his heart.

"Your turn, Williams," said Volturio, and this time his boring eyes settled upon the third man in a gaze of the most burning scrutiny.

Williams read. An angry flush surged into his face; he lifted a clenched fist as if to smash the table; then relaxed.

"If Skarrs says it is so, it is so, I suppose," he remarked, quietly. He pulled off another wet strip from his cigar.

Volturio crossed his arms upon the table's edge. "I got that message from Skarrs half an hour ago," he said, speaking with deliberation. "I see that it is perfectly intelligible to us all. Skarrs informs us that one of us has gone over to the police. He says, as you see, that he had no time to put his suspicions and inquiries into his cipher-note, nor inclination. He just says that he is absolutely certain. Skarrs never talks like that unless the thing *is*. Hurriedly he puts us on our defence. He thinks he can ascertain the name of the spy in our midst, but has no clear data at present. He warns us, I say. That is worthy of Skarrs. We feel obliged; that is to say, *three* of us feel very much obliged to Skarrs. It appears, therefore, that three of us are on the edge of a precipice. That is an unendurable state of affairs, I think. The scheme which assembled us here goes, of course. The Duchess of Claypool can keep her diamonds, and be damned. That has become minor. We have to deal with a far more serious matter, gentlemen. To-night, here, in this room, we have got to probe to the evil—and kill it! That is clear?"

"Daylight clear," said Brodie. He took off his spectacles.

"Imperative, absolutely," agreed Linegar. He sniffed and he blinked.

"Give us a lead, Volturio," said Williams, tearing at his ragged cigar.

Slowly, deliberately, Volturio turned his face from one man to another and back again. "It's not going to be easy," said he. "And it's horrible—horrible! One of us men, sitting here, has gone over to the police, either to save his vile hide, or for money. That one is a spy. The question is—which one? Linegar, is it you?"

"It certainly is not."

"Williams, is it you?"

"No, Volturio."

"Brodie, are you this scum?"

"Emphatically—no."

"There remains myself," continued Volturio, in a tone of deep gloom. "I think you can rule me out. If I was the traitor I should scarcely have laid the cards on the table, you will admit."

"Allowed," said Linegar.

"Obviously you would have kept quiet," agreed Williams.

"You are cleared, Volturio," said Brodie.

"All right. That leaves three of us. Better, but still hard. One thing shines in an arc-light of certainty: it is that we are going to have our revenge. We must not let the spy amongst us leave this room to-night. How much he has told the police we do not know. By silencing him we may ease our danger, or we may greatly increase it. But we will have our measure of vengeance. We will find him, here and now; we will put a pistol ball in his heart; and then we will drop what is left of him out of the window? Are you all with me?"

They were, and they said so.

"We may stay here all night; all to-morrow; but we will not leave this place before settling our account. If we do, we lose our chance. In making this disclosure I have given the alarm to our spy. That could not be avoided. Yet it is so much the better, for it compels us to act—at once!"

As Volturio finished speaking he thrust a hand into a side-pocket and brought out a revolver with a long, blue-steel barrel. The deadly-looking thing he placed on the table before him, putting his big hands over it. Three pairs of eyes, fixed gloomily and apprehensively upon him, watched his movements, then travelled again to his stern, set face.

A LONG pause ensued. They all looked steadily at Volturio. They wanted a lead. In a tense, deep silence they waited. All they heard was the dulled fall of the rain in the night.

Presently Williams ventured a remark. He said :—

" Are you keeping anything up your sleeve, Volturio ? "

" What do you mean by that ? "

" Are you possessed of even a shred of information which would help us in this inquiry ? "

" Not the veriest shred. All I know is what you have read for yourself in Skarrs's note there."

" Then how shall we make a start ? "

" I'll begin. First, Williams, we will take yourself. Have *you* betrayed us ? Are *you* the spy in our midst ? Is it *your* light that must be put out before we quit this place ? You must stand up to the question. Now, you have an argument in your favour : you have already spent a year or two in jail — in an Indiana penitentiary."

" You reckon that in his favour ? " queried Brodie.

" I think so."

" Why ? " demanded Linegar.

" Because, having gone through the flames once, he might not be so nervous of arrest as one who had not faced the music. And then the police might not accept, as a spy, the services of a man who had been convicted. I do not say they would not, only that they might not. We will turn to you, Linegar."

" All right ; go ahead." He sniffed and blinked rapidly.

" It is not easy to suspect you," continued Volturio. " A man who has had a University education, and who fills a high-up niche in fashionable society, would naturally be very much averse to placing himself and his affairs in the hands of the C.I.D. He would feel that, however lightly he might be let off for giving away his pals, he would scarcely be let off altogether ; and a single month—a day !—in prison, would damn him and his position eternally. Such a man are you, Linegar. It is a point we have got to bear in mind."

" What about me ? " cut in Brodie, whipping off his spectacles. " *I* haven't been in a penitentiary. *I* do not dine with dukes and duchesses."

" Very true," answered Volturio, sombrely. " And against you, Brodie, is the fact that you are a married man with kids. Your sort might well give way to a nervy panic which would send you round to New Scotland Yard. Nevertheless, I much doubt if you did this dog's trick. Next to Skarrs, you have the brains. Some of your flashes revealed the born crook. We all remember that, in that matter of the Evershed emeralds, you put your finger on a weak link and saved us from certain capture. No, I do not see why we should particularly suspect you, Brodie."

" I swear that I am straight," answered Brodie, with a rather husky laugh.

" We all swear that," grunted Williams.

" This has led us not an inch along the trail," said Linegar. " Unless——" he paused.

" Unless what ? " demanded Volturio.

" I suppose we mustn't include Skarrs in this inquiry ? "

" An idle question. The answer to it is the same as I used in my own defence : if Skarrs had betrayed us, he would have given no warning."

Williams spat out a shred of his cigar. " Then I fail to see——"

" Hush, for God's sake ! " whispered Volturio, lifting a hand.

Each man stiffened to stone. A half-minute passed. Nothing happened.

" Did you hear anything ? " said Brodie, pale as ashes.

" There is someone outside," answered Volturio, in a barely audible voice.

The whisper was scarcely out of his mouth when human knuckles rapped loudly upon the door, which Volturio had locked.

" Too late ! " gasped Linegar. " We are trapped. The devil amongst us arranged it for to-night ! "

The summons was repeated, harsh and imperative.

" The police ! " panted Brodie, paler than ever. " Who'll go ? "

" Keep your seats," warned Volturio, a flash passing over his eyes. " If that is the police, then the man we are seeking amongst ourselves will be the one who will want to open the door—that he may throw himself upon their protection. That won't do, by death ! I'll choose." And his fierce, heated eyes glanced from one face to another.

The knocking became an uproar.

Volturio spoke. " You, Williams, open the door."

Williams drew a long, deep breath. He left his seat, turned the key in the lock, flung the door ajar.

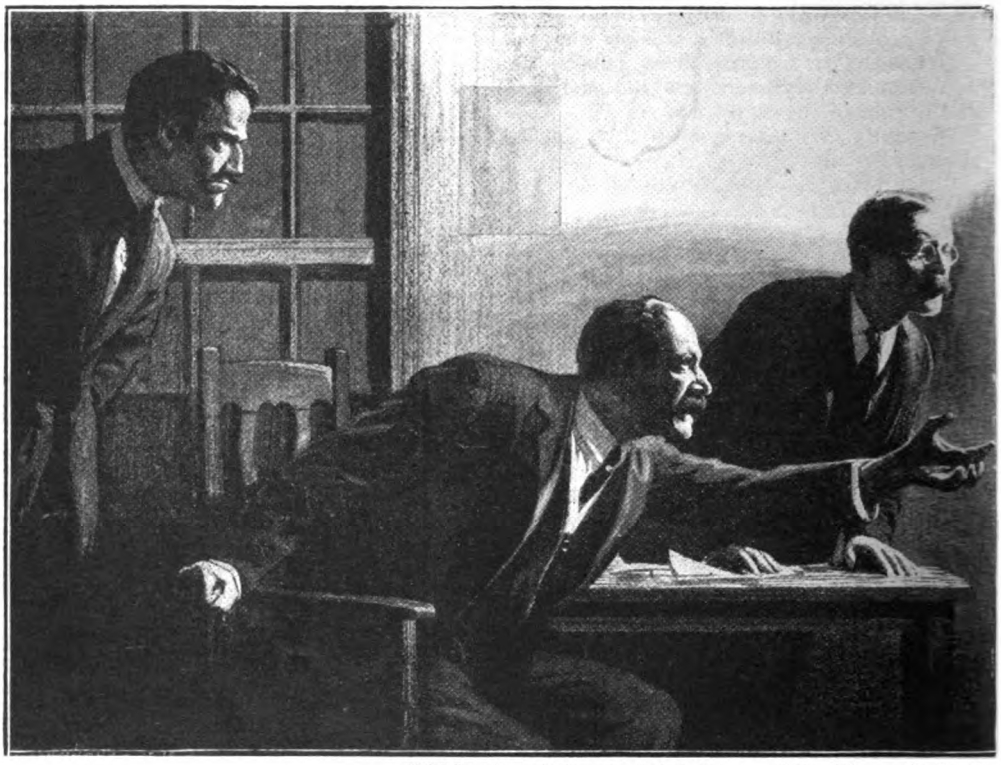
Brodie burst into an hysterical laugh.

It was only the caretaker of the offices who stood outside.

" Beg your pardon, gents," he stammered. " I listened and heard nothing, and thought you had gone."

" All right, old son," answered Volturio.

" I'm filling the coal-scuttles, gentlemen," said the caretaker, apologetically. " If you've finished with yours, I'll take it along with the rest."



"'Hands off!' yelled Williams. 'By life and death,

"Do so. And leave it outside. We don't wish to be interrupted again."

The caretaker departed with the iron scoop, and Volturio locked the door again.

"False alarm," said he, grimly. "We will continue."

And he resumed his seat at the table.

LINEGAR, whose nerves were shaking, observed: "I should like to end this thing quickly. We can't remain here all night."

"We do not go until we have found our man and put him into the dark," said Volturio, steadily. "Patience. I feel in my bones that we shall get him."

"It looks like a dead end to me," said Williams, dejectedly.

"Think of a way out of it, then," answered Volturio. "Mine is not the only head present." He took up the blue-steel revolver and seemed to weigh it in the palm of his left hand. "I repeat—this pistol has got to shut the mouth of one of us to-night. I have the key of the door, and it remains in my possession."

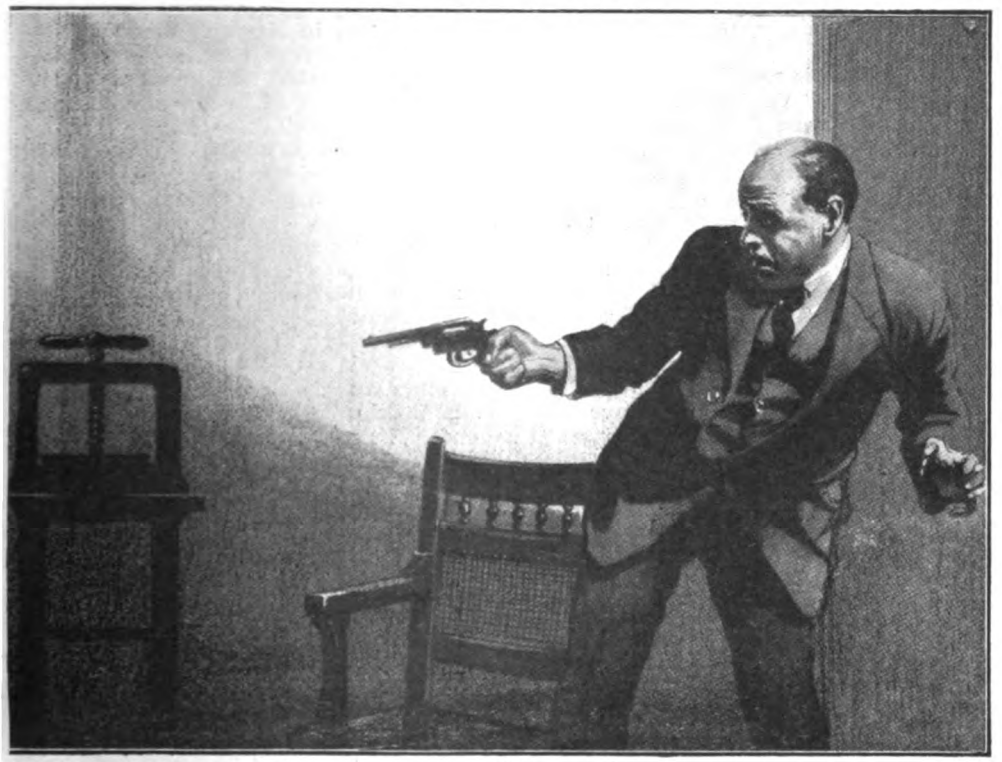
"Possibly Skarrs may have jumped to a false conclusion?" was the next remark, which came from Brodie.

Instantly Volturio's eyes were upon him. "Just why do you harp on that?" he asked, coldly. "Is Skarrs the man to send us that message unless he *knew?*"

"No—no," faltered Brodie, who saw suspicion of him blazing in every face. "Of course he was certain. I take back my remark." And with a tremulous hand he wiped his spectacles.

Williams pushed back his chair savagely, and with thumbs in his armholes and chewing his cigar viciously, he began to walk up and down, up and down, trying to think out the terrible conundrum. Presently he came to a stop before the window, staring blankly at the pane, in which a dim image of his face seemed to hang, without a body, in the outside blackness. With a curse of impatience and irritation he threw up the lower sash to inhale a breath of cold air. He did not see Volturio half-rise; he did not hear Brodie's husky "Watch him!"

The rain made thunder in the dark; a steady roar which neither rose nor fell. Williams filled his chest; he laid his hands upon the sill and leaned out, peering into the well, which went down a hundred feet, and which, in that total gloom, seemed to drop a thousand. Feeling the rain upon his head, he drew back and took hold of the sash to jerk it down again; and at the



I'll shoot the first man who comes near me!'"

same time he removed the butt of his cigar, as if with the intention of throwing it outside.

"Stop that!"

Volturio's voice, sharp and cutting as the lash of a heavy whip, made him start and wheel round as if a pistol-ball had hissed past his head. He saw glaring eyes fixed upon him; white and menacing faces; and at once he understood.

"All right," he said, swiftly but quietly. "You thought I was going to make some sort of signal? I can understand, but you are wrong. My cigar has been out for ten minutes. See for yourselves."

He laid the ragged butt upon the table for all to examine.

"Satisfied," snapped Volturio, and he swept the fragment into the fireplace. "Best keep your seat, Williams. You see what delicate ground we are on, and the least action may be open to suspicion."

At that moment they heard the shuffling footstep of the caretaker outside, and the clank of the coal-scoop as he put it down in a corner.

Linegar burst out: "Oh, curse that fellow!" And then, as a thought struck him: "I suppose he is—*all right*, eh?"

"Be easy," answered Volturio. "I have satisfied myself on the point. He is what he seems—a caretaker."

Brodie, who had opened his mouth once or twice as if to speak, now exclaimed, stammeringly:—

"I should like to put forward a suggestion, if I can do so without prejudice to myself."

"Let us have it, by all means," acquiesced Volturio.

"It is——" The speaker faltered, casting a furtive and a sombre eye upon the long pistol which Volturio was fingering. "I don't want to be misunderstood." He hesitated.

"Let us have your idea," repeated Volturio.

"Here it is, then," blurted Brodie. "As there seems but little chance of our spotting the spy in our midst, I suggest that he be offered a chance of grace; let us stipulate a time—a few minutes—for him to make up his mind to confess. Let us pledge our word that, if he admits his guilt, we will not kill him. We shall then at least know where we are, and means can be taken to keep him quiet until we have made ourselves safe."

"Bah! He will not believe us," scoffed Linegar.

"Oh, hell! but something we must do!" exploded Williams. "It is easy to talk of

sitting here indefinitely, but there comes a limit."

Volturio rolled his scowling eyes from one face to another. "You forget that we are here to deal out revenge," he replied, sullenly. "You talk of making ourselves safe, if this cursed business has not gone too far? For my part, I do not see how it is possible. The dog probably gave away our past; and if the police withhold their hand for the present, it is because they want to take us red-handed in the scheme which we have just abandoned. Still, we will give your idea a chance, Brodie. I allow the man amongst us who has done this devilish thing three minutes in which to admit it: and I promise that he shall at least leave this building alive, even if we kill him later on."

As Volturio spoke he put his watch upon the table.

"Three minutes," he repeated, "and not a second mor "

The term .. grace commenced. In the deep silence could be heard the ticking of the watch.

"One minute has gone," said Volturio, grimly.

No one dared to move, for fear that it might be interpreted as the beginning of a confession.

"Two minutes!"

The ticking seemed to become faster—louder—to race.

"For God's sake let the fellow speak and end this!" cried Williams.

No one answered him. The silence became a torment.

"Three minutes! The time has expired," said Volturio.

He took up his watch and replaced it on the gold chain.

Linegar burst out hoarsely: "I say, this is becoming more than my nerves can stand. It is certain that the fellow will never be spotted, at least not while we sit here, because he knows that we have nothing to go upon."

"Absolutely nothing at all," answered Volturio, in a deep, menacing growl.

"Then how, in Heaven's name——?"

Suddenly everyone gave a violent start, which showed the tension that gripped them. It was caused by the abrupt trilling of the telephone-bell.

Volturio was first from his chair. He left the revolver upon the table. He unclipped the receiver from its hook and placed it to his ear. He called into the instrument, answering someone: "Yes, yes." Then, for an instant, he averted his head to glance over his shoulder at the others.

"It's Skarrs," he rapped.

They all looked at him intently. He was speaking again into the 'phone. He called out, in an amazed voice: "*What?*" Then he dashed the receiver into its clips and spun round. His voice rang out like a clarion. "Skarrs has found out! He has told me the name!"

That triumphant, ringing cry was scarcely uttered when Williams hurled back his chair and grabbed the revolver from the table. He leaped away, screaming out an imprecation.

"Hands off!" he yelled. "By life and death, I'll shoot the first man who comes near me!"

Volturio's voice, calm and strong, boomed out: "Steady, everybody! Listen to me. It was not Skarrs speaking. It was my housekeeper. I had arranged for her to call me at the very minute she did. It was a trick, and it has won. There stands our damned spy—self-confessed!"

Williams howled as if demented: "I don't care! I don't care! Keep away, or I'll shoot!"

Volturio uttered a laugh that was frightful. "Blaze away!" he mocked. "The revolver isn't loaded!"

The three men bore down upon Williams. There rose the sound of scuffling feet, of pants for breath, of the window being flung up, of a half-strangled cry for mercy, which was followed by a wild scream, and ended by the thud of a body on the stones a hundred feet below.

SOLUTION TO "A TALE WITH TANGLES IN IT"

On page 452 of our last issue.

(1) *Page* 452, *Column* 1, *Line* 16: The nightingale is not found in the Highlands. (2) *P* 452, *C* 1, *L* 17. The nightingale sings also by day. (3) *P* 452, *C* 2, *L* 18: There can have been no ace-queen finesse, as he held all four kings. (4) *P* 453, *C* 1, *L* 1: Brass does not rust. (5) *P* 453, *C* 1, *L* 11: Kit-cat size is 36 by 28 inches, and shows more than this. (6) *P* 453, *C* 1, *L* 63: But he was smoking a pipe. (7) *P* 453, *C* 2, *L* 22: A strict Jew is obliged by his religion to drink wine on certain occasions. (8) *P* 454, *C* 2, *L* 10: It was a quarter-day, so the month cannot have been July. (9) *P* 454, *C* 2, *L* 27: He was not yet forty. See above. (10) *P* 454, *C* 2, *L* 50: He had an important engagement that evening. See above. (11) *P* 454, *C* 2, *L* 54: The boa is not venomous. (12) *P* 454, *C* 2, *L* 62: It is the stalagmite which grows from the floor upwards; the stalactite grows from the roof downwards. (13) *P* 455, *C* 1, *L* 23: Troy weight takes its name from Troyes, in France. (14) *P* 455, *C* 2, *L* 13: His name was Portlinnock. (15) *P* 456, *C* 1, *L* 33: White male cats with blue eyes are invariably deaf. (16) *P* 456, *C* 2, *L* 15: He had been ordered to the sea. (17) *P* 456, *C* 2, *L* 26: It was not a cenotaph, as his great-uncle was buried there. A cenotaph is an empty tomb.

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Nature intended your hair to be beautiful. But unnatural conditions of living—insufficient outdoor exercise, worry, overwork, ill-health, &c, have robbed it of its natural lustre, and made it brittle, dull, scurfy. If you wish to make your hair beautiful, you must daily rub into the scalp

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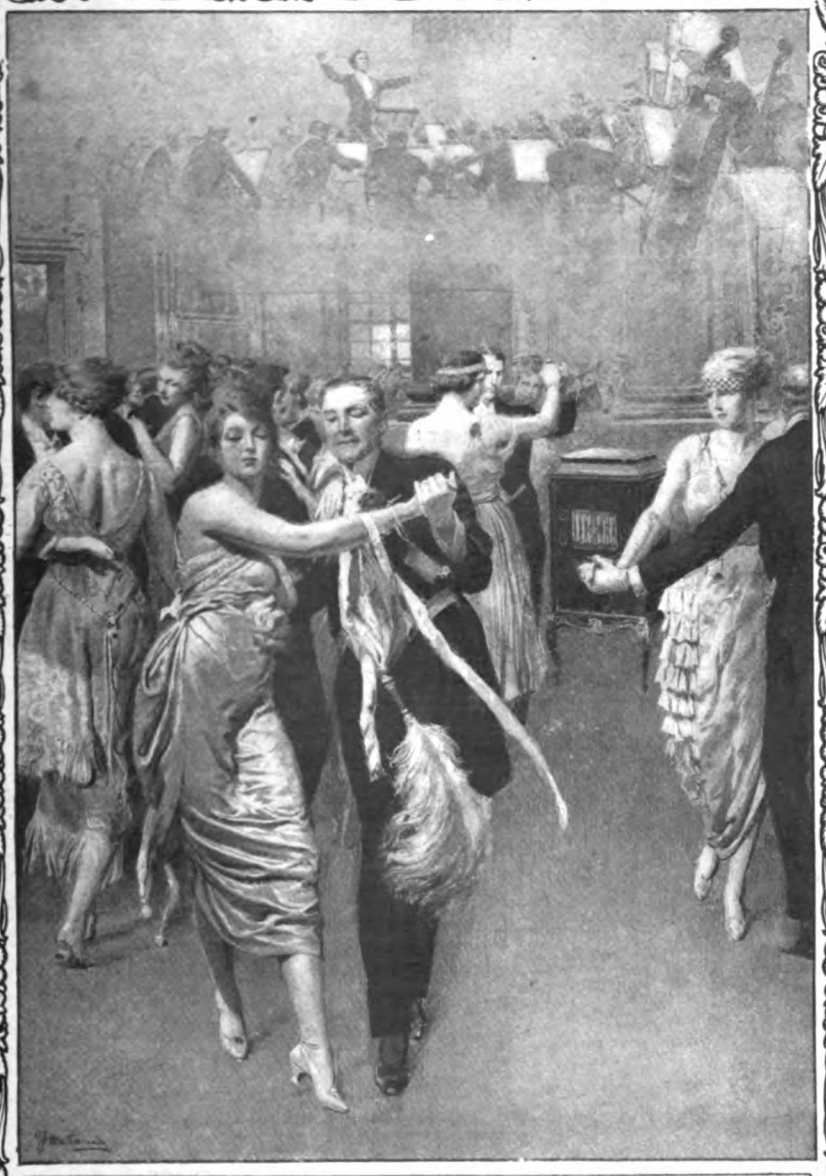

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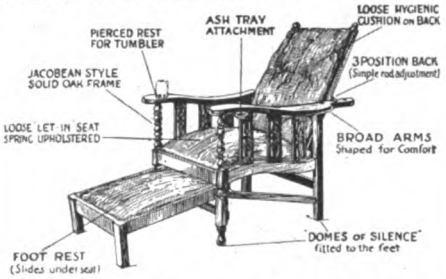

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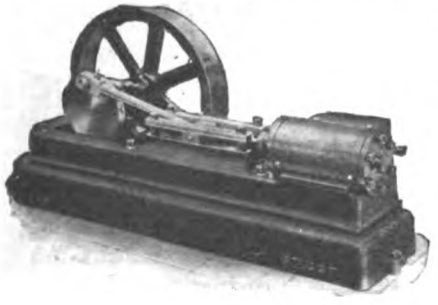

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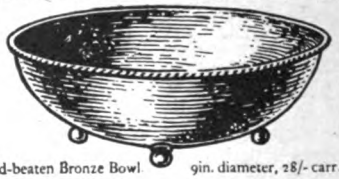

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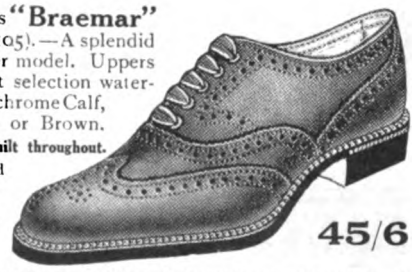

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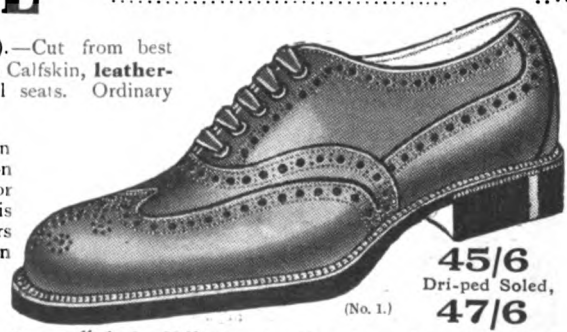

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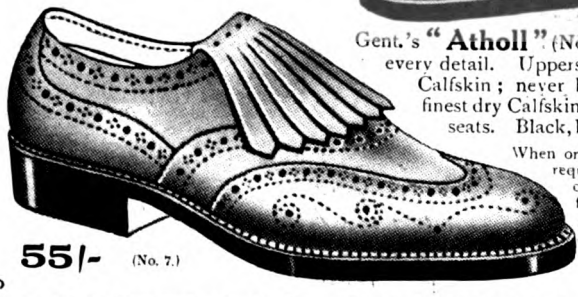

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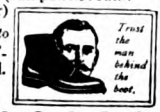

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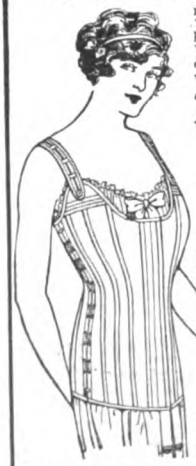

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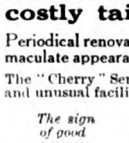

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HELEN LAWRENCE TREATMENT
FOR
Superfluous Hair

"Removes the Hair, Destroys the Roots"—but does NOT harm the skin.

The hair roots are gradually weakened, soon they are destroyed once and for all, making it impossible for new hair to grow. It is not painful, no electricity is used, and it leaves behind a pure smooth skin. The benefit is immediate, the first application showing gratifying results.

Send for an "efficiency sample," **2/-** Ordinary size, for home treatment, **12/6.** Personal treatment at Kensington, **10/6.**

HELEN LAWRENCE, 167, Kensington High St., London, W.8.
(First Floor.) *Telephone:* Western 7141.

BOW LEGS, ARE YOU BOW-LEGGED?

Without.

IF so, there is no need to worry about it, for if you wear the B.L. appliance (which acts in every way like an ordinary garter) no one except yourself will know you are bow-legged. From the moment you commence to wear this appliance you cease to suffer any embarrassment, as your **TROUSERS ALWAYS HANG STRAIGHT.** Bow-legs are a detriment to business, spoil your pleasure, and are a nuisance always.

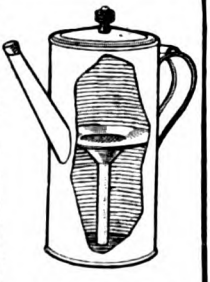
The B.L. appliance will make you *appear* straight-legged, for your **TROUSERS WILL HANG PERFECT.** Easy to put on, easy to take off, weighs only 1¼-ozs.

With.

Write for Illustrated Booklet S.M. **FREE** *and sent under cover to*

THE B.L. APPLIANCE CO.,
Saffron House, Charterhouse Street, E.C.

COFFEE MADE IN A MOMENT!



Dr. Mills' Patent Price
Coffee Pot 6/6

This Coffee Pot was invented by a physician who spent many years in a Coffee Producing Country, and who learned by experiment the best method of making Coffee. This Coffee Pot makes Coffee in a moment—leaves no grounds—extracts only the very essence. Will be sent post free for **6/6.**

PHINS, 45, MURRAYGATE, DUNDEE.

Don't buy new Carpets

CLEAN THOSE YOU HAVE
They will look like New if you
USE **CHIVERS' CARPET SOAP**

One Tablet is sufficient for a large Carpet.

SOLD AT ALL STORES.

Sample tablet **2d.** *stamp.*

F. CHIVERS & CO., LD.,
1, Albany Works, BATH.

A WONDERFUL OFFER 10/6

To popularize our exquisite Duro Pearls we have decided to offer, for a limited period only, a charming guinea necklet, 16 inches long, with solid silver clasp set with paste brilliants, for **10/6**; and to the first five thousand purchasers we will present, free of charge, a graduated bead necklet 28 inches long. This necklet alone is valued at **7/6**, and is supplied in five different colours, namely, Clouded Amber, Ivory, Coral, Deep Blue, and Deep Red.

We guarantee to refund your money, including postage, if the goods do not give complete satisfaction, provided they are returned to us undamaged and within seven days. *The two necklets are illustrated in this advertisement.*

DURO PEARL DEPT.,
104, HIGH HOLBORN,
W.C.1.

Your Frock and your Pleasure

can be completely spoiled by

PERSPIRATION

but

POUDRE DE SANTÉ

will keep you cool, sweet and comfortable, and your frock dainty and unsoiled throughout the longest dance or in the hottest climate.

¶ Poudre de Santé is the only known Toilet Powder that can be relied upon to correct excessive perspiration and deodorise the normal secretions of the skin. No woman of refinement and good taste can afford to be without it.

¶ Send for the Poudre de Santé Comfort Book to-day; or order a Trial Box.

Boxes from **2/9**, post free.

MARSHALL & CO.

70a, BASINGHALL ST., LONDON, E.C.2

Metalcraft.

Your home will be rendered exceptionally beautiful by the use of Repoussé Metalwork. Clocks, Mirrors, Plaques, Candlesticks, Coal-Boxes, etc., executed after the style of the old Craftsmen.

The artistic hour-striking Clock shown here will make an Ideal Gift this Christmastide. Price in brass, **£7.17.6**, carriage 5/- extra. Dimensions, 15in. by 16½in. In various designs and metals.

Belfrage & Bentley (Dept. S)
100, Cowcaddens St., Glasgow

How Doctors Avoid Colds

"A great Physician said he never had a Cold although constantly in the way of infection, simply because he KEPT HIS NOSE IN ORDER. Another prescribed inhaling antiseptics." *Daily Mail, October 18th, 1919.*

To avoid Colds and Influenza, use

Dr. MACKENZIE'S SMELLING BOTTLE

Of all Chemists & Stores 2/- *or post free in U.K for* 2/3 *(stamps)*

Dr. Mackenzie's Arsenical Soap,
Ideal for the complexion.

John Taylor's Oxygen Tooth Powder,
In boxes 7½d., **1/3, 2/6** and **4/-**.

MACKENZIE'S LABORATORY, READING.

These Series of Pens write as smoothly as a Lead Pencil. Neither Scratch nor Spurt, the Points being rounded by a Special Process.

Attention is also drawn to our **PATENT ANTI-BLOTTING PEN.**

Assorted Sample Box of either Series for 10½d. in Stamps from the **Works,**

BIRMINGHAM.

FOR SHATTERED NERVES

SHORTENS CONVALESCENCE.

PERMANENTLY STRENGTHENS THE ENTIRE SYSTEM.
RECOMMENDED BY THE MEDICAL PROFESSION FOR NEURALGIA, INSOMNIA, FATIGUE, BRAIN FAG, ANÆMIA, NERVOUS INDIGESTION, LACK OF CONCENTRATION.

TRY VINO-FOSFA TO-DAY

Sample bottle **6/6** post free

From **HARRODS** and leading Stores and Chemists throughout the Country.

Wholesale Agents: MACRATH & CO., Leamington.

THE VERY LATEST BOOK ON MARRIAGE

Readers of THE STRAND have often read announcements of our clean sex books, and will admit their exceedingly high standard.

In this new volume—"Wise Wedlock"—the author, Dr. G. Courtenay Beale, has given his best. It is undoubtedly the most complete book ever published on questions affecting marriage relationships. In our monthly magazine, "Health and Efficiency," we had recently some instructive articles on Birth Control which brought and still are bringing many hundreds of enquiries which prove that the greatest need in Sex Literature to-day is a frank, unequivocal volume which will give the answers to these questions in a clear and clean manner. You will find all the information you have long sought in

WISE WEDLOCK **6/9** **Post Free**

Other books have touched the fringe of the subject, but in "Wise Wedlock" you will have all your questions answered. Write now, while you think of it, to address below, enclosing cheque or postal order for **6/9**, and the book will reach you by return post in sealed cover. A copy of "Health and Efficiency" will be sent with the book.

HEALTH PROMOTION Ltd., Dept. 39, 19/21, LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.4.

VARICOSE VEINS

A New Scientific Treatment

bringing speedy relief and a certain cure for

VARICOSE VEINS, ULCERS

and every other form of Leg Complaint

AWARDS, GOLD MEDAL AND DIPLOMA

(Brussels Exhibition of Alimentation and Hygiene, 1920)

HUNDREDS OF TESTIMONIALS

All of them spontaneous and unsolicited, including many from medical men and other professions, showing how they have been permanently cured.

THIS WONDERFUL METHOD

is fully described in Booklet **B**, which will be sent on application, together with *free sample* upon mentioning this paper,

Sufferers from **RUPTURE** should also send for Booklet **A** and *free sample* and read how, by a marvellous and inexpensive treatment, **RUPTURE CAN BE PERMANENTLY CURED** without the aid of a truss, with its torturing springs and lumpy pads.

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WORKS: PASSY, PARIS.

CONSUMPTION

ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS, & NASAL CATARRH.

The Dr. Edwin W. Alabone Treatment.

After the most severe tests, there can now be no doubt as to the success of the "Alabone Treatment" in the Cure of Consumption. From all parts of the world reports have been received from professional men and others stating that cases of phthisis have been permanently cured by its adoption.

The reader must bear in mind that this is not a treatment which has suddenly sprung up (like so many others only to speedily die a natural death); we therefore feel justified in stating that an unprejudiced trial would absolutely demonstrate that it is possible to cure consumption by means of the specific treatment promulgated by Dr. Edwin W. Alabone.

Prior to the advent of the Alabone Treatment it was taken as a foregone conclusion that no consumptive could ever be well again, but hundreds of consumptives who, acting on advice, have undergone the treatment, have been restored to their wonted health, and able to resume their usual vocations; in many of these cases the cures have been little short of miraculous, seeing that the patients were in the last stage of consumption, and all hope abandoned.

TESTIMONIAL.

This case was in a very serious condition when examined by the late Dr. E. W. Alabone, there being a cavity in the right lung, hæmorrhage, dyspnœa, loss of flesh, etc. The Patient has remained in good health ever since, as will be seen by his letter.

"London, 1st October, 1921.

"The Edwin W. Alabone Treatment, Ltd.

"Dear Sirs,—I believe it was in January, 1914, when I wrote stating the immense relief I had received from the late Dr. Alabone's treatment. In that letter of testimony I doubtless also mentioned the time at which I first consulted Dr. Alabone (it was in October, 1899), and I well remember him telling me my case was a very bad one of consumption. That the recovery in my case was of a permanent character is proved by the fact that I still enjoy good health after practically 22 years, and am always keen for business. I feel it to be my bounden duty to send you this further letter, hoping much that a perusal of same will serve to induce many sufferers from chest trouble to try the treatment which did so much for me, and which, from my personal knowledge, has proved distinctly successful in many other cases. I need hardly add that you have my full permission to make whatever use you like of this testimonial. I cannot fully express my thankfulness for the lasting benefit I received from Dr. Alabone's unique and certainly wonderful treatment, and I may mention, in conclusion, that I have never failed to recommend it to others when opportunities for doing so have occurred.
—Yours very gratefully, (Signed) N. J. H."

MEDICAL OPINION.

"Kent, 2nd August, 1921.

"I intend carrying on Treatment for another three months. . . . My doctor is certainly very pleased, and we are, beyond measure."

Full particulars and copies of recent testimonials and medical opinions will be sent free on application to the Secretary, The Edwin W. Alabone Treatment, Ltd., Lynton House, 12, Highbury Quadrant, London, N.5, from whom can also be obtained Dr. Alabone's important book, "The Cure for Consumption, Asthma, Bronchitis, and Other Diseases of the Chest," which will be forwarded for 3s. 6d. post free.

OVER 40 YEARS' WORLD-WIDE REPUTATION

DEAF

Certainly not!

I wear the New Danjhill Earphone with the invisible earpiece attachment, and I can hear perfectly. Why not let the Danjhill Earphone do this for you?

ALL THAT IS SEEN OF IT.

Invisible Earpiece Attachment 18/- extra.

Write for trial terms now. Sent free by return of Post.

PRICE **42/-**

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Have *You* Started Maxalding?

The following are extracts from SOME of the Testimonials received in ONE morning's post.

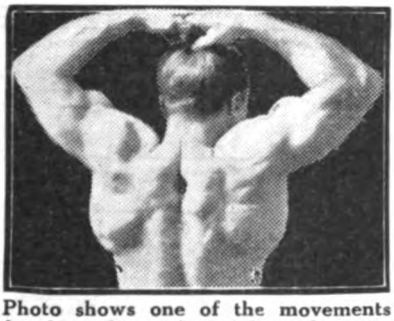


Photo shows one of the movements for the making of straight and strong backs and increase of Nervous Energy.

CURED OF CONSTIPATION.

STAFFORD: "I am pleased to say that I am getting along with the exercises A1, and am not now troubled with the constipation." —J. G.

NOTTINGHAM: "I am ready for the third lesson as my bowels are working all right. I am very pleased to say I am beginning to feel quite a different man now from when I first started your course."

PHYSIQUE IMPROVED.

A. C.: "My muscular condition is becoming excellent and I may say how much I appreciate and thank you for your Course, which has given me something to live for, and made a man of me, where before I was only an invalid. I may say also how much I enjoy doing your exercises."—C. W. C.

CURED OF INDIGESTION.

GLASGOW: "Since starting your course I find I can take a good hearty meal and have no complaint of heartburn after same."—A. T.

WEIGHT INCREASED.

MANCHESTER: "I am very well satisfied with the results of the exercises, as I am now sleeping well, securing bowel action very regularly, and I have gained about 10lbs. in weight and am now able to lift and carry greater weight than before—this last only tried experimentally—just to ascertain to some extent if the exercises are affecting my physical strength. Being pleased with the course, I recommended it to ————, a colleague of mine."—P. S.

WEIGHT DECREASED.

"I have to report a loss of girth round abdomen of 6 inches of loose, fatty matter, increased appetite, improved digestion. I fully enjoyed the exercises; in fact, have got to look forward to them, as I do my meals. I feel more fit and well than I have experienced for the past 15 years. Kindly accept my warmest thanks for your kind courtesy and attention." —From pupil 60 years of age.

By MAXALDING you can rid yourself of Constipation, Indigestion, Mal-assimilation, Rheumatism, Lack of Will-Power, Loss of Self-Confidence, Nervous Debility, Obesity, Neurasthenia, and other Functional Weaknesses in a period of one to three months.

MAXALDING is the triumph of mind over matter, for by it you control yourself. Once you have secured a satisfactory condition of health by MAXALDING you begin to accumulate a store of nervous force and energy which will first find an outlet by building new and pure muscular tissue.

Write for the Booklet entitled "MAXALDING," and in your letter please state whether you desire to eradicate a Functional Disorder, to develop a Perfect Body, to increase Energy or to acquire Great Strength.

Address your Letter :

MAXALDING,

171, New Stone Buildings, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.

NEURASTHENIA

(The Twentieth-Century Disease)

NATURE'S OWN CURE.

Medicines and drugs, diet treatments, exercise and "rest cures" have alike proved incapable of, or only partially and temporarily successful in, overcoming this condition. Small wonder, then, that the neurasthenic despairs of a cure—regards himself or herself as incurable.

Neurasthenia arises from lack of Nerve Force. The only method of restoring lost Nerve Force is to recharge the system with Electricity, the natural force secreted in the air we breathe, and which in itself is scarcely distinguishable from Nerve Force. For years the difficulty of the Scientist and the Physician has been to find a means, at once cheap, convenient,

Don't hesitate. Make up your mind to investigate the Pulvermacher Electric Treatment TO-DAY.

Indecision now may cost you a Life-time of Ill-Health and Suffering. Write for Free Particulars TO-DAY.

and comfortable to the patient, of employing this great vitalising natural force. Until the Pulvermacher Electrological Treatment overcame these objections, Electrical Treatment was far too costly, too cumbrous, and too much confined to expensive hospitals and institutions for any but a very rich minority.

ELECTRICITY—THE NATURAL CURE.

To-day the Pulvermacher Treatment brings it in its best form within the reach of all. You can carry out this most successful form of Electrical Treatment in your own home. You can wear the Pulvermacher Electrical Appliances at work or at play.

HAVE YOU ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS?

If your nerves are weak or disordered, if your limbs tremble, if you have numbness or nerve pains, if you are inclined to brood over your affairs, if you are nervous, timorous, and undecided, if you worry over trifles and fear for the future, if your memory and will are weak, if you lack self-confidence, if you feel crushed and choked in a railway carriage or closed rooms, if you feel dizzy in open thoroughfares or nervous among a crowd—these are all symptoms of Neurasthenia and should not be neglected. A Free Book, entitled "A Guide to Health and Strength," describes how the wonderfully successful Pulvermacher Electrological Treatment cures quickly and permanently Neurasthenia, Nervous Dyspepsia, Nervous Disorders, and the many functional troubles due to lack of Nerve Force.

INQUIRY COUPON.

By posting this **FREE FORM TO-DAY** you will receive the "GUIDE TO HEALTH AND STRENGTH," which has pointed the way successfully to thousands. You place yourself under no obligation by applying for this Book and particulars of the Pulvermacher Appliances.

Name .....

Address .....

☛ **Post to the Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute, Ltd., 56, Vulcan House, 56, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.**

STRAND MAGAZINE. *Dec.*, 1921.

WHY SUFFER

miseries through

Neurasthenia, Morbid Fears, Neuritis or Neuralgia, Chronic Gastritis and Colitis, Chronic Gout, Arterio-Sclerosis, Chronic Rheumatism, Diabetes, Graves' Disease, Chronic Piles, Chronic Asthma, Chronic Bronchitis, Chronic Eczema, Acne, and other Chronic Heart, Lung, Nerve, Skin, Digestive, Uric Acid, Kidney, Bladder and Prostate Troubles, when gentle, simple, yet thoroughly reliable

SYSTEMATIC TREATMENT

might quickly relieve and surely cure these Chronic Maladies? If you have taken the usual prescriptions, tried many patent medicines, and are still uncured, order at once and read without delay

"EVERYDAY CHRONIC MALADIES"

Their Causes, Course, and Cure.
By MAURICE ERNEST, LL.D.,
Homœopathic Consultant.

Nearly 200 pages illustrated. 9th Edition. **2/-**

The author, Dr. Maurice Ernest (or Ernst), of 93, Cromwell Road, London, is an unorthodox medical man who has given more thought to, and thanks to his large practice gained more experience in, the treatment of Everyday Chronic Maladies than any living authority. His book will show you how Systematic Treatment can cure almost any Chronic Ailment. Thousands of Chronic Sufferers have benefited by "*Everyday Chronic Maladies.*"

Send at once 2/- (Postal Order or Stamps) to the Publishers, **M. A. ADAM & CO., 85, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1,** and the book will arrive, post free, by return; or order it at the bookstall.

DRINK HABIT

Conquered in 3 days.

Years have passed since I was freed from the drink habit. Since then I have been the means of aiding **thousands of men and women** to give up alcohol. Some have willingly taken treatment, others have been saved without knowing the cause.

The drink craze disappears, and is replaced by a more normal condition of appetite, nerves, etc. **The improvement in the health** of an ex-drinker is marvellous when he gives up alcohol. Men **drinking a bottle of whisky or more daily** are safely and effectively stopped. **No danger to health, but a steady improvement manifests itself from day to day.** There is no inclination for alcohol; the former drinker is surprised and delighted at the great change.

The legions of testimonials, with photographs, which come to me from all over the world, offer irrefutable evidence of the sterling merit of my treatment. I send ample proof to every inquirer. *Three days' guaranteed method.*

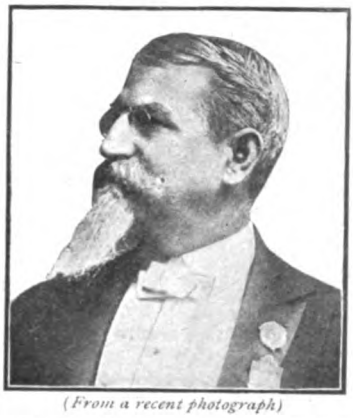
It costs nothing to receive my book. It tells of my own experience and of how you may save yourself or another. Mine is **a genuine, reliable, and safe treatment,** that can be taken in one's own home privately. The treatment is supplied under legal guarantee, involving no obnoxious restrictions. I count friends by the thousands—men and women who are known to me only by correspondence—who praise the Woods Treatment for the benefit it has done them, or others near and dear.

FREE BOOK

I will send you my book in plain, sealed envelope promptly, post paid, on receipt of your request. I appeal especially to those who have wasted money on ineffective remedies. Correspondence strictly confidential. Address:

Edw. J. Woods, Ltd., 167, Strand (353 A.P.), London, W.C.2.

I WAS BALD



(From a recent photograph)

I was born in 1852, and, just as my photograph shows, I now have a full growth of hair. Yet thirty years ago I found scurf upon my scalp, and my hair began to fall away, until after a while I was classed as a "bald-head."

Call it vanity if you will, it was displeasing to me to remain bald. Furthermore, I believe it is our birthright to have plenty of hair upon our heads.

Seeking a Hair Growth

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that in the hope of growing new hair I had experimented with one thing and another—the usual array of lotions, pomades, shampoos, etc.—without getting any benefit. At that age I looked older than I do now. Later, when I became a trader in the Indian Territory of U.S.A., some of the Cherokees jocosely called me "the white brother without a scalp-lock."

American Indians Never Bald

I never saw a bald Cherokee Indian. Both braves and squaws almost invariably use tobacco, eat irregularly, frequently wear tight bands round their heads, and do other things which are commonly ascribed as causes of baldness. Yet they all possess beautiful hair. What, then, is their secret? Being on the spot—most of the time at Tahlequah—and upon very friendly terms, it was easy for me to gain information from the usually taciturn Cherokees. I learned exactly how American Indians grow long, luxuriant hair, avoiding baldness and eliminating scurf or dandruff.

(From a photo when bald)

My Hair Grew Again

Then I applied these secrets to myself, and my hair began to grow. There was no messing or trouble about it. The new hairs emanated from my scalp as profusely as grass grows on a properly-kept lawn. I have had a plenitude of hair ever since.

Numerous friends of mine in Philadelphia and elsewhere asked me what had performed such a miracle, and I gave them the Indian elixir. Their hair soon grew over bald spots. Scurf disappeared wherever it existed—and it never returned. That these persons were amazed and delighted is stating the fact mildly. The hair that grows is strong and silk-like. It has beautiful lustre, and imparts the appearance of health and vigour.

A Testing Box for You.

To any person who writes a request for it and encloses sixpence in stamps (or a P.O.) a testing box of Kotalko will be sent post paid. Mention Mrs., Mr., Miss, Rev., etc., and sign name plainly. Kindly address your letter as below. After using the testing package, when you observe that your hair is beginning to grow—even if you have been bald for years—you may obtain a further supply from the proprietor.

Address: JOHN HART BRITTAIN, Ltd.,
2, Percy Street (201 A.L.), London, W.1.

Are You Fit and Able to Bear the Burden?

In these strenuous times we must have our full resources at our command. Weakly and suffering, you cannot bear the strain. You require vigorous health and strength, and these you will only regain with Nature's own remedy: Electricity.

The celebrated "Ajax" Dry Cell Body Battery gives you just the right nature of current, of sufficient volume to saturate your whole system with this life-giving element. **It infuses new energy, vim and power into every single nerve, muscle and tissue of your organism.** You just apply the Battery for one hour daily, whilst resting, and this new life is pumped into your body without shock, inconvenience, or irritation of any kind. It is powerful but soothing, and thousands of "Ajax" patients will tell you that it achieves all we claim for it.

Cures are obtained in the most chronic cases, even when all other methods have failed. Write at once for our explanatory book entitled **"Electricity, the Road to Health,"** which describes how weakness is overcome and replaced by luxuriant health and strength; how pains and aches are driven out and all nerve troubles banished for ever.

WE SEND IT FREE.

It costs you nothing, so write at once. You will then learn how Rheumatism, Lumbago, Sciatica, Neuralgia, Neuritis, Paralysis, Bowel, Stomach, Liver, and Kidney troubles, and a host of others, are cured by the most successful treatment in existence. Write whilst you have it in your mind, and this most interesting book, fully illustrated, will at once be sent to you FREE OF ALL CHARGE, by return of post. It will be an eye-opener to you, so write to-day, NOW. AJAX LD

THE BRITISH ELECTRIC INSTITUTE
(Dept. 17), 25, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.1.
South African Branch: 70, Pritchard Street, P.O. Box 7222, Johannesburg

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REGD.
THE NEW GAME WITH COLOURS

AT LAST! AN ALL-BRITISH CARD GAME of absorbing interest for young and old. A game based on the mystic hues of the rainbow, which everybody will love to play, not once or twice, but always. RAINBOW is exciting and amusing, and incidentally imparts a knowledge of colour-blending in the simplest manner.

Beautifully finished in every particular, RAINBOW costs but 3/9 complete (post free).

Send Postal Order to-day for a sample game, to ROBERT JOHNSON'S, 2, London Rd., Leicester.
(Retailers should write for Trade Terms.)

Please, Santa Claus, remember "Rainbow."

1/- Saves 30/-

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BETTER THAN NEW BOOT LEATHER

Waterproof and Invisible. Trebles the life of Boot and Shoe Soles.

Price post free—Small Bottle 1/3, Large Bottle 2/4.

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The Practical Present

BRITISH-MADE OUTFITS.

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Price 52/6 Carriage Forward.

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The Dainty

Gives a sweet freshness to the skin.

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